



'Drinking, the gateway to globalisation' - How are young Indian women making sense of their participation in drinking cultures?

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DECLARATION

I certify that except where indicated, all material in this dissertation is the result of my own investigation and work; I have conducted all work and collected all data independently, or within a group, as required by my particular project. All references used in preparation of the text have been cited.

The work has not previously been submitted as part of any other assessed module, or submitted for any other degree or diploma.

I also provide permission for my work to be viewed by students in future years.

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to understand the ways in which young Indian women are negotiating and managing their access to the Mumbai night time economy (M-NTE). Through ethnographic fieldwork, which consisted of participant observation and in-depth interviews of five female middle class young Indians (22-24 years) who participated in Mumbai's alcohol drinking cultures. The data gathered during fieldwork and from the interviews was analysed through a post-structuralist/ social constructionist framework and showed that access to these drinking cultures is linked to larger issues to social mobility with the middle class (es). Furthermore, I argue here that participation in the M-NTE is an "impossible space", which can partially be managed through culturally specific strategies. In conclusion, the M-NTE, is not about getting intoxicated, unlike the British night time economy (B-NTE), but is related to learning to identify alcohol with modernity and a global identity.

Introduction

This thesis presents an ethnographic study of a group of young women's alcohol drinking practices in urban Mumbai. The aim of the study is to understand the practices and sense making of these young women within the wider context in which this drinking occurs, which I argue includes a dynamic between globalization, neoliberalism, and national and gendered identities.

The participants in this study may be understood as participating in a new form of drinking, that with reference to research in the UK, I call the 'Mumbai night time economy' (M-NTE). I will argue below, the M-NTE is part of a globalized process in which new drinking practices originating from the British night time economy (B-NTE) were taken up by young people in other Western countries such as New Zealand, Australia, and which are now moving to emerging markets such as India. These drinking practices are part of a 'culture of intoxication' that is characterized by heavy or 'binge' social drinking with the explicit aim of getting drunk. The culture of intoxication is in part, enabled by consumerist identities that are played out on and offline, and by both men and women, in ways that map onto a postfeminist sensibility.

To contextualize the drinking practices of the Indian participants in this study, I therefore start with the UK. I examine the factors that enabled the UK culture of intoxication to emerge and consider analysis of the gendered nature of this drinking. I also explore the subsequent developments in alcohol marketing through social media that have led to alcohol consumption and the culture of intoxication becoming pivotal in the social and personal identity practices of many young people in Britain, and other Western countries such as Australia and New Zealand.

In the second section of this introduction I move to India, showing how consumerism became central in Indian government policy to develop India economically as an important 'emerging market' for Western multinational corporations. I examine the role of the middle class consumers as central in this new India, one outcome of which has been a set of the contradictory subject positions that contemporary urban Indian women

must negotiate that contrast national and global/modern identities. In so doing, I map parallels between postfeminist contradictions for women in both the UK and India, while highlighting the way that globalization works through neoliberal regimes of governance that incorporate local cultural variations, suggesting that young Indian middle class women are likely to experience similar issues when drinking with their counter parts in the UK and other Western countries, but also new challenges or experiences produced through their local and national context.

The introduction highlights the importance of an interdisciplinary perspective that can draw on research from psychology, sociology, anthropology, marketing and politics to contextualize at an appropriate level the complex interconnected factors that provide the backdrop for the consumer and identity practices that are the focus of this study. In so doing, I take a Foucauldian position by situating the sense making of the participants in this study within the wider socio-historic, political and economic contexts in which it occurs. In so doing, I offer an original study that moves analyses of the culture of intoxication as it relates to gender and postfeminism into new contexts, in particular countries, like India, which do not have an established drinking culture. The thesis also contributes to an understanding of the changing notions of traditional Indian identity and femininity within the larger influence of neoliberal self-management.

1.1 The British drinking landscape

The following section contextualises young people's drinking practices in UK and other Western countries. I start with an account of the sociological changes leading up to what Measham and Brain (2005) called the "culture of intoxication". The "culture of intoxication" is a post-industrial drinking culture that emerged from three key factors: UK government policies aimed at addressing socio- economic issues of the time associated with deindustrialization; neoliberal deregulation of markets including alcohol deregulation; and rave culture, the 'decade of dance', that was responded to by the alcohol industry with new ways of marketing alcohol. This sociological analysis is followed with a review of literatures from psychology, sociology, and marketing that explored young people's motivations for participating in the culture of intoxication, and how these practices were underscored by gender and class. I then explore the role of online alcohol marketing in facilitating the culture of intoxication and cementing (branded) alcohol drinking as a central feature in contemporary Western young people's social and personal identities that are played out both on and offline.

Understanding "drinkatainment" - pleasure, leisure and time-out in deindustrialised Britain

Britain has a long drinking history, through which various cultures of intoxication or moral panics about drinking can be identified (Marsh and Kibby, 1992; Edwards, 2000). The rise of the current British culture of intoxication can be traced back to the 1980s "binge and brawl" culture, which according to Tuck (1989) was a result of several complex factors acting together enabled by deindustrialisation and its effects on the traditional public houses (pubs). Deindustrialisation's consequences varied depending on the region within Britain, with the South-West benefiting from these changes with a high-growth rate, while the North-East became characterised by its declining traditional working class professions (Tuck, 1989). These changes meant that drinking

establishments needed to adapt for new markets. In the South there were young people, male and female, with disposable incomes to be marketed to, while in the North the reduction in the traditional customer of traditional pubs (mixed aged, working class men) required new customers to be developed (Mintel, 1988; Measham and Brain, 2005). The alcohol industry addressed these issues by fragmenting and then developing these fragmented markets, which combined with deregulation and town and city councils keen to regenerate their public spaces through new drinking establishments, created a new set of mixed-sex, consumer oriented drinking practices for young people (Mackiewicz, 2012; Measham and Brain, 2005).

As well as responding to wider socio-historic and economic factors such as deindustrialization, the alcohol industry also responded to rave culture and what Measham and Brain (2005) call the 'decade of dance'. The significance of the "decade of dance" which consisted of the British acid house and the rave scene, was the move away from alcohol or dance drugs for a minority of young people (Reynold, 1988). Additionally, it changed broader attitudes surrounding illicit drugs and some researchers suggest this process of normalisation resulted in a "platform of acceptability" to further experimentation, an attitude that spilt into the consumption of alcohol (Parker *et al.*, 1998; Shapiro, 1998, p.33). For example, Measham and Brain make the case for the rise of illicit drugs and their importance in the changing drinking landscape and the wider attitudinal changes surrounding experimentation with psychoactive substances (Brain, 2000; Measham, 2004b, 2004c).

Although the "decade of dance" only concerned a minority of young people, the fear of losing that demographic of the alcohol market, alongside the aforementioned traditional pub consumers, resulted in the alcohol industry taking action. The outcomes included a rebranding of alcohol to respond to the rise in illicit drugs by recommodifying alcohol as a "psychoactive product" (Collin & Godfrey, 1997), which included the development of new drinks such as up-market beers and alcopops; the use of psychedelic imagery in alcohol marketing; and changes to the traditional pub to accommodate a new consumer base that included cafe style bars, themed bars and clubs that serve a diverse range of often high alcohol drinks that included cocktails, shots and alcopops (Chatterton & Hollands, 2001; Fry, 2011; Hollands & Chatterton, 2002; Measham & Brain, 2005;

Tuck, 1989). The subsequent set of drinking practices that emerged were characterized by conspicuous social drinking in public places, which were tied into consumerist identities enabled by developments within neoliberal consumer society.

The 'culture of intoxication' (Measham & Brain, 2005) is now part of a set of normalised practices for many British young people, in which heavy social drinking is viewed as pleasurable, sociable and normative (Brown & Gregg 2012; Lyons & Willott 2008; Szmigin *et al.*, 2007; McCreanor *et al.*, 2008; Hutton 2012). The culture of intoxication provides the backdrop to contemporary young British people's drinking and social lives, so that many young people place significant importance on alcohol consumption (Szmigin *et al.*, 2008; Fry, 2011). Drinking and nights out are now an important part of young people's search for gratification, integration in friendship groups and communities, and is associated with pleasure, allowing young people to negotiate their identities whilst simultaneously maintaining the symbolic sense of togetherness that is often associated with drinking (Fry, 2011; Pettigrew & Ryan *et al.*, 2000, p.71).

As noted above, high levels of alcohol consumption are characteristic of the culture of intoxication, which means drinking with the intention of getting drunk. In order to understand the psychology of drinking, we must evaluate the ways in which drinking is bound by time, location and social setting (Measham, 2004a). Within the culture of intoxication, drinking to get drunk is not an accidental outcome, rather one that is carefully planned and controlled (Brain, 2000, p.7). Researchers in the field have used several terms to describe this planned component of drinking to drunkenness, such as "controlled loss of control", and "determined drunkenness" (Measham, 2004a, pp. 319, 321) and "calculated hedonism" (Szmigin *et al.*, 2008). In this sense, drinking is seen not as a means to an end, but an end in itself and draws on the idea of instant gratification (Fry, 2011).

Part of the desired end point of drinking is moving into a "state of altered being" (Brain, 2000.p. 273). Measham agrees, adding the importance of the "hit value" or "buzz effect", i.e. the alcohol content of the drinks, as an important consideration in achieving this state as quickly as possible. However, despite the seeming desirability of getting drunk, there is an element of limits or boundaries that are placed on this activity, as implied by the terms 'controlled loss of control'. (Brain, 200.p. 272) refers to this push-

pull aspect of alcohol consumption as "bounded hedonistic consumption". The boundaries are those of time, place and social setting. For example, that these activities are restricted to the weekends "drinkatainment" itinerary (Fry, 2011). Thus, analysts argue that young people exhibit both personal and social control whilst engaging in high levels of alcohol consumption, creating the somewhat paradoxical aspect of 'controlled loss of control', which is missed in British media portrayals of this drinking as form of "total abandonment" (Fry, 2011, p. 69)

Brain relates this 'controlled loss of control' to a kind of cost-benefit analysis in terms of fitting these drinking activities within other leisure and work commitments. Similarly, Fry (2011) argues that these drinking practices are a kind of economic rationalism in which drinking is more than a weekend "letting off steam" but part of a rational, calculated and strategically managed process. A position shared by Parker (2003, p.7) who considers this "letting off steam" as part of a "work hard- play hard dichotomy" (for similar arguments, also see Szmigin *et al.*, 2008; Measham 2004; Brain, 2000).

Within the above perspective of planned and controlled intoxication, alcohol is considered part of a larger framework of the pursuit of pleasure through consumption, which Fry (2011) conceptualizes as "experiential consumption" in that it creates an image around drinking which is, "cool, desirable, exciting and fashionable" (Fry, 2011, p.66). The idea of "experiential consumption" which is derived from consumer culture theory literature (CCT) posits the symbolic use of products and taken as such, alcohol consumption within the British culture of intoxication (also called the British night time economy) is linked with the search for happiness, meaning and fulfillment (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1992).

The term British night time economy (B-NTE) highlights the commercialised aspect of the British culture of intoxication, since it operates within commercial spaces and newly developed establishments that formed part of the regeneration of city centres and sophisticated marketing strategies used by the alcohol industry in the 1980s and 1990s (Measham, 2004; Griffin *et al.*, 2010; Hadfield 2006; Hollands & Chatterton 2002). Consumerism was a key tool in the development of neoliberal markets that were characterised by deregulation to enable the international requirements of capital. The

subsequent neoliberal regimes of governance created a requirement for citizens to also be flexible and adaptable creating the context in which people were encouraged to understand themselves as the outcome of autonomous choices and thus responsible for the development of their own “project of the self”, a reflexive construction of identity which is produced through self-monitoring, wherein, the citizen as an individual needs to be autonomous and make rational choices in order to improve themselves so as to keep contributing or competing for the demands of the state (Rose, 1999; Giddens, 1991). Central to neoliberal subjectivity is the idea of transformation and the expectation to improve oneself and strive to be their “authentic self” (Giddens, 1991 p.225). A central method by which the neoliberal subject is expected to grow and improve oneself is through consumption (Riley, Morey, & Griffin, 2010). Thus, the responsibility of the citizen as a contributing member of the state is “rewarded” by earning the right to consume. This “right” to consume is essentially tied into the citizen’s responsibility towards the state, but also constructed as her/his “passport to a world of possibilities” (Chowdhary, 2012, p.61). As outlined above, in the case of alcohol, the many products marketed to young people, and young women in particular, offered a range of positive identities associated with ‘experiential consumption’.

Young Women and the B-NTE

Indeed, both alcohol marketing and wider neoliberal governmental discourses addressed women as important and specific targets. In the context of deindustrialisation and a rising service economy, the ideal flexible citizen was conceptualised as female (Harris, 1994). Combined with wider changes in gender relations and employment law, women’s economic participation and thus disposable income increased, making them a new target for the alcohol industry which could consider them an under exploited market. This led to what Lyons & Williot consider a “feminisation” of the B-NTE (Lyons & Williot, 2008)

The “feminization” of the B-NTE involved creating a new drinking space. Previously public drinking in Britain was characterised as mainly working class, mixed age male groups. This changed as drinking was opened up to a much wider spectrum of society, which included women and middle class clients. In this sense, the night time

economy provided an arena for men and women to drink together in a new egalitarian way, however, the traditional constructions of gender and class around alcohol consumption are still existent. For example, women's participation in the culture of intoxication created a series of media panics, which portrayed young women drinkers as irresponsible, dissolute, and a social problem (Measham & Ostergaard, 2009). This issue had both classed and ethnic dimensions, since it was mainly white working class women who were the focus of much of the medias' concern surrounding women's excessive drinking (Skeggs, 2005).

In terms of gender, the media panic showed a cultural anxiety surrounding women's drinking that demonstrated concerns around women's femininity and sexuality that mapped onto traditional gender roles and discourses of respectability and reputation. Participating in traditionally masculine behaviours such as drinking made women vulnerable to being constructed as deviant and thus legitimate targets for male aggression, particularly as fashions of the time were for a hyper-sexual femininity. The outcome was that young women participating in the B-NTE needed to manage the issue of safety while being intoxicated (Parks & Sceidt, 2000; Ferris, 1997; De Crespigny *et al.*, 1999).

Griffin also highlights other contradictory requirements for women participating in the B-NTE, which she does by considering young women's drinking within the context of postfeminism, a sensibility that involves various characteristics including a shift from sexual objectification to subjectification made sense of through discourses of autonomy, choice and empowerment through consumption (Gill, 2007; Evans & Riley, 2014). Postfeminism both draws on feminist discourses e.g. of empowerment and autonomy, while also refuting feminism, as no longer needed (McRobbie, 2009). The outcome is that women are encouraged to make sense of their social participation in highly individualistic ways, and as if traditional gendered discourses that problematise women though their femininity and sexuality, are no longer in existence. Research from Griffin, and other analysts argues that traditional gender discourses do exist and must be negotiated by young women participating within postfeminist drinking cultures. The problematic notions of femininity are based around traditional socio-historically based ideals, which are problematic for young women drinkers in the UK. For Griffin, young

women drinkers are in an impossible space, to drink like a girl is not to fully participate in the culture of intoxication, but to do so risks taking up an unfeminine position of drinking like a man. Thus there is no good place from which women can participate in the culture of intoxication. Furthermore, when young women participate in the culture of intoxication they are either constructed as "unfeminine" for participating in excessive (traditionally masculine) drinking practices, or as a sexually promiscuous, unrespectable "slag" (Griffin, 2006).

Thus while the commodified and commercial drinking environment that is the B-NTE is a place in which women can participate and in many ways, is a place that invites women to participate (see for example, layouts designed to be female friendly, drinks marketed to women), women who participate in the B-NTE risk having their identity and femininity questioned through a range of traditional gendered discourses, including the sexual double standard. These discourses disadvantage the young women who participate in drinking cultures who must negotiate them (Bailey & Griffin, 2014). In this section I've outlined the development of a culture of intoxication that emerged and developed in the UK in the 1990s. The culture of intoxication is now normative for many young people in the UK, and has been 'exported' to other nations with similar historical drinking cultures such as Australia and New Zealand, and other European countries such as France, whose culturally dominant drinking practices were historically more moderate.

The 'culture of intoxication' is characterised by heavy or 'binge' social drinking with the explicit aim of getting drunk by both men and women, in ways that map onto a postfeminist sensibility, that both celebrate an equality of participation while also subjecting women to more traditional gender discourses that position women in problematic drinkers and question their notion of femininity. As such women are both invited to participate whilst also being the target of largely gendered alcohol marketing, and must negotiate discourses that construct their participation in problematic ways (see for example, public health campaigns that implied that women were responsible for being raped should they be too intoxicated to take care of their safety). Another important consideration while addressing the B-NTE is that, since the 1990s the culture of intoxication has developed at the same time as the internet and social media technology, and there is a significant difference between young drinkers today and their peers twenty

years ago in that their social and drinking lives occur simultaneous in both on and offline. The following section therefore explores the online aspect of the culture of intoxication, with a particular focus on developments in alcohol marketing and how these have subsequently shaped young people's drinking practices and related subjectivities.

The "Culture of intoxication" and "New media technology"

Alcohol marketing played an important role in the corporatisation of the B-NTE and current trend of excessive drinking practices within the culture of intoxication (Austin and Rich 2001; Babor *et al.*, 2010; Casswell and Zhang 1998; Gordon *et al.*, 2010; Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth 2008; McCreanor *et al.*, 2008; Mosher 2012; Smith and Foxcroft 2009). While traditional modes or "above the line" forms of marketing, which include direct advertising in print or broadcast media are still prevalent, the alcohol industry has directed significant efforts to mobilise the potential of social media for alcohol marketing (Hastings, 2005).

Modern marketing techniques integrate and strategically synchronise the relationship between the product and the consumer. Nowhere is this more prominent than in marketing campaigns that effectively engage with new technologies, specifically social media; the dominant social networking site (SNS) being Facebook. SNS's allow the alcohol industry to effectively engage with their audience in creative ways, by using "below the line" marketing strategies (Hastings, 2005).

Griffin *et al.*, (2012) argues that the salient features of Facebook coupled with the value and importance young people place on using the platform allows a "way in" for alcohol companies, as it enables the alcohol companies marketing efforts to engage with their audience in personalized ways. Thus placing the alcohol companies in close proximity with its customers. The close proximity, along with the blurring of the user/consumer dichotomy that characterises web 2.0 technology, enables the alcohol industry to connect with its consumers in very creative and effective ways within a largely under regulated environment (Van Duyn, 2007).

Alcohol companies have seen the potential of social media for marketing and are

reaping the benefits of it as a powerful communication medium that is relatively under regulated. For example, Diageo a large multinational alcohol company signed a multi-million dollar deal with Facebook in 2011, and instantly saw it pay dividends, with its fan base increasing from three and a half million to twelve million the same year. A case study conducted by Mosher (2012) of Diageo revealed that 21 % of its marketing budget is spent on Facebook and Youtube. Smirnoff, another large alcohol brand, spent 90% of its digital budget on Facebook and the number of "likes" for the Bacardi brand went up by 289% due to their intensive marketing efforts (Socialbakers, 2011). In 2011, Diageo announced after signing its multi-million dollar deal with Facebook "the two companies will work together to push the existing boundaries of social media through co-created experiments leveraging the full capability of the platform. Facebook will also provide metrics to help Diageo define ROI (return on investment) and performance across its priority brands" (Cited in Carah, 2014, p. 263).

A comprehensive understanding of the ways in which social media works in terms of alcohol marketing is still in its early stage (McCrenor *et al.*, 2013; Nicholls, 2012; Mart *et al.*, 2009). However, the following section explores the literature to date, in order to highlight aspects that are important to our understanding of important role of SNS's in alcohol marketing to young people.

The "sticky" nature of social media, in that its members visit it frequently to check updates, allows alcohol companies to have access to demographic that is constantly tuning in and checking their Facebook (Hearn, 2008). One possible reason for their "sticky" nature is the high volume of photographs and videos (i.e. multimedia content) which are continuously being used and reused creating a space where its users are provided with a visual accompaniment to their social interaction, which has made it integral to young people's identity, relationships and lifestyles (Boyd, 2007). The high volume of multimedia content in the form of photographs and videos which occupy members news feeds are a possible contributor due to which members are constantly tuned in (Boyd, 2007) (newsfeeds are streams of information which are shared by members Facebook "friends", and appear on their home screen). This "sticky" nature of the platform is beneficial for marketers as it provides a marketing avenue which is accessed frequently and regularly by its users.

Another important characteristic of SNS's which are important for the alcohol industry's marketing efforts is the ability to tailor marketing campaigns directly to the consumer whilst also receiving constant feedback from the consumer. A content analysis of Facebook pages (akin to websites, but within the Facebook platform) of alcohol related content highlighted the prominence of commercial alcohol content within the site (Mart *et al.*, 2009). For example, the researchers identified one million people connected with or in Facebook terms were "friends" with up to 93 brands of beer. In terms of spirits, the researchers found 334 pages with more than 3 million friends. More recent statistics from the UK as part of a review conducted by Nicholls (2012) points out ways in which the "brand authored marketing communication" takes place through his three main findings. These include, real world tie-ins, interactive games and sponsored events. An example of the first of these marketing campaigns is the Smirnoff "Nightlife Exchange Project" (hereafter NEP) is a real life branded event which takes place in clubs and at sports themed events and has been Diageo's (Smirnoff's parent company) biggest marketing expense (Sweeney, 2010).

These real life events enable and in fact, encourage its attendees to share their photos, comments and tweets about the event. This is achieved through tactical tweets and use of hashtags such as 'Were you at the Nightlife Exchange? We want #stories. We want #pictures Go!'(Nicholls, 2012, p.2). These tweets and pictures often feature on the brands' Facebook page and act as further advertising for the event and the brand. Furthermore, it blurs the distinction between the user-generated material and the brand's official content. This level of engagement in the form of "likes" and sharing of multimedia content by users and brands is immersed into socialising between the users of the site.

These strategies extend beyond the online space, to include real world activities such as sponsorships, competitions and special promotions are an important consideration in relation to the spread of culture of intoxication style commercialised drinking within the B-NTE. They include social media marketing strategies in the form of interactive games, which often involve an online audience participation that is reinforced with free giveaways (tickets to events, discounts etc.). It is interesting to note that these pages do not attempt to sell the products in an obvious way, rather the point is to increase the

number of people who "like" the page, thus becoming "friends" with the brand which allows more user-generated content to appear on the brand page. The third strategy includes sponsored online events on Youtube and other online productions. These ranged from Youtube short films to links to ask people for their opinion on the brand's new advertisements. Interestingly, in most cases there was no talk of the brand, drinks or nights out, however, Nicholls argues that the aim here is to allow the online audience to comment and engage in conversation in a strictly branded environment.

These kinds of social media marketing strategies are financially beneficial in a number of ways. First, they are low cost, for example Mosher's case study of Diageo highlighted the financial benefits of these kinds of social media marketing strategies, which is eluded through the company's digital marketing head's quote stating, "The days of lavish £200,000 websites are over" (Diageo, 2011a). Mosher's study also highlighted other benefits, including how social media marketing allowed Diageo to become a market leader in the youth market (Mosher, 2012). McCreanor *et al.*, (2013) explains that these strategies as efficient ways for companies to increase their market reach and influence their target audience with pro-alcohol messages. The light hearted tone of these "conversations" of brand pages with its friends (people who "like" the page) creates a certain kind of kinship with the brand and as Nicholls argues, the casual conversations about alcohol lead to routinisation of branded drinking (Nicholls, 2012). The outcome is a complex role of social media, not only in terms of marketing of alcohol but also its contribution in facilitating and contributing to the culture of intoxication (Nicholls, 2012; Niland 2013; Szmigin *et al.*, 2011).

Jernigan and O'Hara (2004, p.631) argue that the social media marketing strategies "have the potential to embed brands in the lives and lifestyles of consumers, creating an intimate relationship and sense of kinship between the brand and user". Facebook marketing works in part therefore because it becomes part of the process by which young people can interact. Although the nature of social media blurs the lines between user-generated content and commercial content, these blurring of boundaries is largely beneficial for the alcohol industry as it allows their marketing efforts to become ingrained into the interactions of people on Facebook (Nicholls, 2012; Carah, 2014; and McCreanor *et al.*, 2013). Facebook is an important social aspect of young peoples drinking

experiences and compliments the marketing strategies of the alcohol industry, as the platform is often used to organise nights out and have conversations about nights out (Hebden *et al.*, 2015). In their in-depth qualitative study on drinking, friendship groups and social media, Niland *et al.*, (2013) point out that participants drew on discourses of "friendship fun" and that drinking was mainly constructed as a pleasurable friendship practice. Which in turn reinforced the "drinking sociality" which is a strategy used to market alcohol to target the young demographic that often implicitly associates drinking with socialising and friendship (Hastings, 2012). Ridout *et al.*, conclude their research on the role of online identity construction by stating "that many young people consider portraying themselves as a drinker on Facebook to be socially desirable" (Ridout *et al.*, 2012, p.25). The role of drinking as a pleasurable friendship activity, which is viewed as a socially desirable trait to portray on Facebook not only normalises drinking but also raises issues about identity and consumption. As Butcher (2012) demonstrated, the Facebook "egderank" algorithm, which determines information that appears on users newsfeed, is designed in a way that promotes certain kinds of social participation over others. This design, within a heavily branded and marketed drinking environment, coupled with the high levels of engagement from young people has implications for identity. Carah *et al.*, (2014) and Hearn (2008) further inform our understanding of social networks implications for identity, by evaluating the social bonds which form around alcohol brands and the resulting "branding of the self" in which branded material, both unofficial and official content (from alcohol companies) are a regular and important part of young people's Facebook experience (Atkinson *et al.*, 2011). Hearn argues that given the ways in which young people use Facebook, the platform promotes "simply continuing social interaction with the brands in the foreground" (Hearn, 2008, p.199).

The interplay between normalised excessive drinking, Facebook usage, friendship practices and its larger implications for the kinds of online identity practices is therefore of great interest to researchers attempting to conceptualise social media and drinking cultures, because it highlights new ways in which alcohol consumption and marketing are enmeshed into young people's identity and social relationships (Carah *et al.*, 2014; Ridout *et al.*, 2012; and Niland *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, examining the ways in which alcohol is marketed in an online environment, also enables us to understand youth participation

within a technologically mediated world (Hebden *et al.*, 2015; Carah, 2014). McCrenor *et al.*, (2013).

Concluding summary

In summary, I have described the British night time economy (B-NTE), the commercialisation of alcohol, the role and impact of new media technologies (specifically, Facebook) in facilitating the rapid commercialisation process. These interrelated factors have all had an impact on the drinking culture in the UK in recent years, specifically in the way in which young people consume alcohol and what that might mean for their sense of "self" and their social process. In terms of the B-NTE, I have shown the importance young people place on their drinking practices within the night time economy, which are a source of pleasure and leisure, which as Fry (2010) describes, it is a part of their "drinkatainment" activities. Furthermore, although the drinking is characterised by excessive sessional consumption or "binge drinking", it is determined and controlled as a part of what Parker (2003, p.7) calls the "work-hard play hard dichotomy".

I also examined the role of new media technologies as a form of alcohol marketing but also a medium through which young people's drinking cultures have developed. I examined the way Facebook in particular, increasingly plays an important role both in young peoples lives and with their participation of in the B-NTE. The Facebook environment allows young people to continue their pleasurable leisure activity through sharing and "re-living" it in an online environment (Hearn, 2008). The platform is an important tool in youth drinking practices allowing them, as Griffiths (2010) points out to live their lives online and offline at the same time. Facebook plays a very important role within the youth drinking practices and is useful part in tying together their drinking activities with their social activities which, although bounded by a certain time and place can now be extended, and stories and drinking narratives can be shared through the platform. Facebook is essentially a commercial platform and marketing efforts are at the heart of its business model, and in the case of alcohol, the user-generated data marketing strategies have implications for young people's identities. Another aspect the platform is

useful for is the subtle ways of integrating the already blurred online/offline social conversations with strategically placed advertising content. Thus creating a symbiotic relationship between the real life drinking and its representation online to create what I consider is a cycle of marketing influences on the drinking culture and in turn the drinking culture reinforcing the marketing.

The role of alcohol consumption and drinking is very important to the socialising aspect of young people but it is also very important in identity negotiations. Not only is alcohol consumption deeply imbedded into sociability, as drinking with friends is a very important part of young people's lives but also, by extension, alcohol becomes an important part in young peoples' identity practices. This implicit link between, alcohol acting as a cohesive agent for social success and liberation is a key narrative that drives alcohol marketing. Similarly to the impact and importance placed on drinking and alcohol, Facebook and the larger social networking sites too play an important role in young people's lives and their management of identities. Both of these avenues (Facebook and alcohol marketing) in the present time have a very strong commercial angle and thus everything that it enables and represents for young people is very intricately linked to their consumption practices. The outcome Hearn (2008) argues, is a "branded" sense of self in the context of Facebook while, (Fry, 2011) similarly suggests the commodification of pleasure within the B- NTE, which takes the form a branded personal narrative played out on the platform which comes across as a autonomous choice of the users.

The above review of young people's participation in the B-NTE and other Western cultures of intoxication that are played out across on and offline platforms highlights the importance of the way in which social life and personal and gendered identities are played out and negotiated within the domain of consumer practices. It shows the centrality of alcohol in many young people's developing identities, highlighting the importance of studying the role of alcohol in young people's identity practices. In the following section, I start with an overview of the socio, political, economic and commercial factors behind the drinking contexts of my participants, which starts with a shift in government policy that led to India developing as an 'emerging' market and focus for global capital.

1.2. The making of Neoliberal India

Neoliberal economic theory provides the backdrop to the cultural and commercial shifts that have enabled a 'branded' sense of self within a culture of intoxication in both the B-NTE and, as I will argue below, the Mumbai night time economy (M-NTE). Below, I therefore start with a description of neoliberalism and its consequences for a new form of citizenship in India. I highlight the ways in which a neoliberal form of governance has become dominant within globalising Indian society with attempts to construct the middle class(es) as the benefactors and participants of consumer culture. In doing so, it is possible to understand the role of emerging commercial drinking culture in urban India and the middle class(es) position within it, specifically focusing on young middle class women.

History of neoliberal economic theory in India

1940s post-independence India's economics and politics were in line with the Gandhian and Nehruvian ideals of socialism and self-preservation (Kothari, 1991, p.557, in Van Wessel). The two main aims of the time were first, to promote national self-reliance, which was taken up in the form of developmental programs of the poor and, second, through cultivating a national identity as a way of re-establishing India after the British rule that had lasted over two hundred years (Van Wessel, 2004). It was under this Gandhian and Nehruvian historical framework of the colonial struggle that the whole legacy of the Indian national identity at the time was built (Chowdhary, 2009). Gandhi and Nehru's philosophies were gradually overturned for neoliberal economic theory, but these principles remain part of the Indian consciousness and, as I discuss below, provide the context for anxiety surrounding globalisation.

Neoliberal economic reforms were tentatively introduced in India the late 1970's under the governance of Indira Gandhi, with the aim of reviving the stagnant industrial sector (Chatterjee, 1997; in Oza 2009). A second round of liberalisation occurred in the 1980's under Rajeev Gandhi in order to solve fiscal problems and in an attempt to make

India more similar to "tiger" economies such as those of Singapore and South Korea. The reforms of the late 1970's and the early 1980's were aimed to reinvigorate the industrial sector and mainly catered towards the business classes interest. However, the growth experienced from these changes had begun to stagnate, attributed to continued regulations on international trade. To address this problem the final phase of economic liberalisation began in the 1991's, which was characterised by the radical loosening of economic controls and regulations so that meant Indian's could "join the ranks of global consumers" (Varma, 1998, p.251). Central to this third wave of economic reform was the development of the middle class, as an expanded middle class provided a population with capital to increase both the domestic market and be attractive to global capital (Van Wessel, 2004).

Although an expanded middle class was central to Indian economic development, academic analyses highlight the problematic nature of this term. Oza for example, starts her discussion about the Indian middle class with a warning of the middle class being "notoriously difficult" to define and categorise (Oza, 2006). Other researchers, too have run into difficulty in accurately defining the middle class (Fernandes, 2009; and Chowdhary, 2011), with Fernandes suggesting that the middle class be thought of as a carefully cultivated "production of a distinctive social and political identity" (Fernandes, 2009) and Van Wessel (2004) highlighting that how, depending on the criteria employed, publications estimate the Indian middle class range between 100 to 350 million people.

Despite these difficulties in definition, it is clear that significant social change has occurred. Prior to the 1991 economic liberalisation, the middle class was relatively small and consisted of professions such as teachers, small business owners and government officials. After economic liberalisation the category became more fluid and complex (Chowdhary, 2009, p.68). As a result Varma (2000, p.123) suggests thinking of the middle class in terms of their income and purchasing power; as "middle class(es)" consisting of lower-middle, middle-middle and upper-middle. In so doing Varma defines the middle class by their income and purchasing power, rather than traditional, pre-economic reform definitions that oriented around caste. In this sense social mobility, or the ability to understand it in terms of the middle class(es) is performative and material, but oriented around money and the consumer goods bought by money, rather than other

symbolic hierarchies such as caste.

The liberalisation of the economy drastically increased the availability of consumer goods in the market, and these consumer goods were constructed in marketing and government propaganda as "icons of class mobility" (Chowdhary, 2011, p.72). Through advertisements in the media and other documents of the ruling Hindu nationalist party, a strong message is sent to "awaken" the middle class of the benefits of globalisation through making the most of these consumer goods. This has resulted in a 'foreign fetishism' and obsessions with stereotyped symbols of modernity among the middle class (Hansen, 2004, p.297).

The narrative of "new India' and the new middle class", both are intricately tied into the positive influences of globalisation and mainly, the economic liberalisation. Chowdhary argues that their promotion is a way for India to take pride in its economic growth rate and its recently achieved economic success. It also symbolises a move away from its colonial past, allowing globalisation to be linked to nationalism aims to move it forward and away from its post-colonial hangover (Chowdhary, 2011). However, this move forward, which is linked to accumulation of international capital, deregulation and a neoliberal form of governance is similar to those experienced in the UK, and other countries with neoliberal economies.

As Neoliberalism moves across the world, it morphs and adapts, however, its key attribute remains the same. These are the economic elements of market deregulation characterised by free market policies. However, other aspects such as notions of citizenship and its relationship to culture within the country begin to change, as Ong highlights in the following quote;

“in the era of globalisation, individuals as well as governments develop a flexible notion of citizenship and sovereignty as strategies to accumulate capital and power. “Flexible citizenship” refers to cultural logics of capitalist accumulation, travel and displacement that induce subjects to respond fluidly and opportunistically to changing political-economic conditions. These logics and practices are produced within particular structures of meaning about family, gender, nationality, class mobility, and social power” – (Ong, 1999, p.6)

Similar to Oza and Chowdhary, the notion of “flexible citizenship is where I

began to trace the consequences of neoliberalism (Oza, 2009; Chowdhary, 2012). Analysis of how neoliberalism has been taken up in post-colonial nations focuses on the idea of “flexible citizen”. Which drives the idea of individualist societies wherein the individual is expected to realign to improve her/his “project of the self” within the fluid changing needs to capital and where the individual is expected to participate and contribute to the state through their consumption practices. The development of the Indian middle classes through neoliberal economic reform has thus required flexibilities around meanings of nationality and gender, for example, that have not always sat well with Indian society, creating, as I argue below, the context for media panics and contradictory demands on middle class Indian women to be both ‘modern and global’ and ‘traditional and Indian’.

Dilemmas of Identity for the Indian middle classes

The middle class has been an important point of media and political focus since the third wave of economic liberalisation, as they gained power and political importance as a potential market for consumer goods, which flooded the Indian market after the economic reforms. The cultural and social construction of the middle class received academic attention from diverse fields, ranging from anthropology and sociology to politics and economics, and their position and role in globalisation has been debated. While Western anthropologists have argued they play a central role within the Indian nation in a time of globalisation (Manekar, 1999; Rajagopal, 1999, in Van Wessel, 2004), critiques from Indian academics has depicted them as a class "unwilling to take responsibility for the development of the nation" (Kothari, 1991.p. 27). Researchers agree that any discussion of globalization in the Indian context warrants an understanding and conversation about the middle class (Lukose, 2005; Oza, 2009; Van Wessel, 2004; Varma, 2000). The crux of these arguments revolves around the significance of consumption in shaping the middle class, in terms of both their identity and their cultural position.

The economic reforms of 1991 resulted in an influx of consumer goods in the Indian market, media and government policies alike, which promoted these consumer goods to the middle class as a way for them to embrace a "global consumer identity" (Chowdhary, 2012, p.64). Chowdhary goes on to explain, that the middle class are

expected to come forward and take their place as global consumers, the promotion of this by the media and government policies were a way to infuse the "ideological markers of consumerist values" within Indian society. This promotion was further facilitated by the increase in credit availability through a rise in equal monthly installment (EMI) schemes. EMI schemes changed the notion of "ownership" and meant that individuals no longer had to save money to buy consumer goods, but could buy and "own" them through EMI's/credit. Oza argues that EMI's and other such financial loans were a means by which the "promise" of economic liberalisation was delivered to the middle classes (Oza, 2009, p.24) and in Foster's words, "nothing seemed out of reach" (Foster, 2008, p.14). This kind of credit attracted foreign investment to India through the promise of the state of a large consuming middle class. This interest resulted in India's foreign direct investment (FDI) to reach fourteen billion between 1991 and 1995-1996 with investing countries including, the United States of America, Japan, United Kingdom, South Korea and the Netherlands (Corbridge & Harris, 2000). This highlights the role of the middle class as aspirational in its global reach since the Indian middle class have an important role in attracting foreign investment and increasing India's economic power on a global scale. EMI's were thus promoted as a kind of government sanctioned scaffolding, as a way of enabling an entire socio-economic group to aspire to be a part of the "new middle class" and embrace the "global consumer identity" through consumption driven practices.

The middle class was also heralded as a way to promote liberalisation within larger Indian society, whilst serving the purpose of simultaneous attraction of investment and being a significant consumer market themselves. However, although the narrative of the "promise" of liberalisation was echoed to both middle classes as well as the rest of Indian society the majority of Indians remain in poverty and have limited opportunity of joining the ranks of the middle class. And even for those who entered or moved up the middle classes, the spread of consumer goods and consumer culture was met with anxiety, since individualised consumerism sat at odds with Gandhian and Nehruvian principles that remain important for many Indians and which positioned consumption as potentially 'un-Indian'. While the benefits of globalisation and taking on the identity of a neoliberal citizen are beneficial in a material sense and provide the long awaited entry into the "global stage", the changing notions of sense making are a move away from a

traditionally culturally grounded, collectivist society. This presents problems for the middle class(es) (Chowdhary, 2011; Oza, 2009) who must negotiate contradictory discourses of ideal citizenship around individual consumption and a traditional "Indian" identity, both of which are evident in government policy and rhetoric, as well as other public and private discourse. As Lukose (2005) along with other social commentators and academics point out, the nature of the government message in relation to the "new middle class" is contradictory in that it promotes the economic benefits of globalisation through consumption but at the same time drives a very strong nationalist (mainly Hindu) agenda. The tying of consumption with globalization and internationalism that is contrasted with a strong nationalist identity creates tensions and a moral panic surrounding contemporary middle class Indian identities. It is these tensions that provide the backdrop against which young middle class Indians consume alcohol in public places, and highlight the importance of understanding the interplay between the global and the local in any discussion of the middle class Indian identity formation (Chowdhary, 2012, p.65).

Young women and the M-NTE

Although middle class Indians are all subject to the contradictory demands to be both nationalist and global/consumerist, these demands are experienced differently for men and women, in part because of women's role in nationhood and traditional concerns over women's sexuality, both of which are relevant to women subjected to neoliberal address across the globe but which, as Ong argues, is also conditional upon local cultural context.

In the context of India, this means balancing their participation in global consumption alongside the requirement of maintaining local culture, which in terms of femininity means not having your own desires; a position counter to consumerism (Derne, 2008). This creates a complicated link between consumption and femininity, which is gendered implicitly with a strong component of moral and cultural consumption requirement placed on women (Srivastava, 2014). Furthermore, Rajan (1993) considers this to be a "skin-deep" modernity, stating that, "The publicly constructed 'new Indian women', then, are those who are 'practised in the ways of the West, and at the same time retain their Indian values', 'successfully achieving the balance between (deep) tradition

and (surface) modernity” (Rajan, 1993, p.133). This has implications for women’s agency and choice, in that not only are their choices tied into consumption, but are complicated by culture and tradition, but as Niyogi de (2012) argues, women are faced with a constant attack from what she refers to as “cultural canons” which imbeds a cultural component into women’s femininity and their consumption practices (Niyogi de, 2012, p.19).

Within the “feminization” of the B-NTE, I discussed key issues faced by women in the UK, which are tied into the socio-historical context of drinking. Although the drinking landscape on the surface seems to be “inviting” women to participate, drinking still remains a complicated avenue wherein women’s identity and femininity is questioned (Bailey & Griffin, 2014). Furthermore, women are faced with a sexual double standard, which understood through a postfeminist analysis can be traced to neoliberal identity practices (Gill, 2007). As such, women are expected to practice and negotiate their femininity through appropriate forms of neoliberal consumption. A neoliberal form of governance presents a similar contradiction for young women in India, which, rather than a sexual double standard, I consider a cultural double standard is placed on their notion of neoliberal choice (Nijogi de, 2012). Indian women are required to balance their participation in globalisation, in order to be ideal middle class citizens, which involves consumption of all things “global”. However, the anxiety surrounding globalisation takes the form of preserving “Indian culture and traditions”, which according to Harris (2004), are placed on women who are seen as gatekeepers of national identity. Indian women’s participation, similar to their Western counterparts is conditional however in the case of Indian women it is based on their ability to manage the economic “global” with the cultural “local”. It is with this cultural lens that their participation in drinking cultures is viewed and thus seen as problematic. The key arguments of postfeminism remain the same in that women’s femininity is tied into the choices they make through their consumption, however when applied to an Indian context, femininity needs to be practiced within an appropriate cultural lens which undermines their choice. A postfeminist understanding informs the present study as it enables me to trace young women’s issues within heavily marketing drinking practices bought about by globalisation. Furthermore, it contextualises these arguments within the contradictory

notions of neoliberal citizenship and its consequences towards feminine subjectivity within a newly emerging neoliberal market which needs to be studied in its localised context.

The current study addresses gaps in our understanding of postfeminist literature within a different cultural setting focusing specifically on the drinking culture. Understanding the implications of globalisation through a postfeminist analysis has not received much academic attention which is addressed in the current study. In terms of academic interest towards the Indian middle class(es), consumer and marketing literature has been growing steadily since the entry of globalisation, with the liberalisation of the economic markets in 1991, and indeed prior to that (markets partially opened up in the late 1980's. [Oza, 2009]). The aim being to create an interest in consumer goods in a traditionally socialist country (Chowdhary, 2009). However, there has been no academic work looking into the newly emerging drinking culture in India and young women's participation within it. India has not traditionally had a drinking culture and although there is no academic literature on the spread of a culture of intoxication in India, the current business models and plans of large multinational alcohol companies such as Diageo are clear in their aims and interest of continuing to expand in the Indian market. Furthermore, their interest in cultivating a strong youth consumer base in line with the large Indian youth population, alongside advancements in new technologies, neoliberal policy and deregulation enable the current study to view and understand a new culture being formed, which currently in their early stage are an attempt at creating a new culture in line with the growth of India's consumer base and are evidence of the culture of intoxication style practices of the UK spreading (Esser & Jernigan, 2015).

Summary of the review and aims of this project

The above review has shown that a 'culture of intoxication' has emerged in UK and has shifted to other countries with drinking cultures and altered these traditional drinking cultures in new ways. This 'culture of intoxication' is characterised by heavy or 'binge' social drinking with the explicit aim of getting drunk. The contemporary culture of intoxication is in part, enabled by consumerist identities that are played out on and

offline, and by both men and women, in ways that map onto a postfeminist sensibility which suggests that drinking cultures, alcohol marketing and youth cultures have merged. This creates a complex pattern, the outcome of which is young people's social and personal identities are deeply imbricated in alcohol, and developed by and through on and off line integrated alcohol marketing. This works because of the way users share and engage with this marketing in a relatively unregulated market (Nicholls, 2012)

Additionally, a postfeminist analysis highlights the way in which women are "invited to participate" in these drinking practices but their participation is not equal with men's, as more traditional discourses continue to exist and problematise women's drinking and make them vulnerable to having their femininity and sexuality questioned, as well as vulnerability to sexual assault and aggression (Bailey & Griffin, 2015). In reviewing the B-NTE we see the importance of wider globalising of the economy, particularly the ideals of neoliberalism which are crucial to understanding the market deregulation. Reviewing the literature on the B-NTE draws together the current work in the disciplines of sociology, psychology and marketing in order to highlight the importance of contextualising young people's participation in the B-NTE within the changes at economic, socio- historical and political levels which are a prominent aspect of the sociology and consumer studies literature. Furthermore, another outcome of the review of literature of the B-NTE is the ability to view this participation through a gendered lens which is achieved by the implementation of a psychological and postfeminist perspective. Having identified the importance of alcohol for young people, and the way the culture of intoxication is located in neoliberalism. The review highlights the idea of neoliberalism being a global phenomenon, which becomes acceptable to its host country by incorporating into its main tenants of consumerism and deregulated markets, local cultural practices and values (Ong, 1999). In the context of the Indian demography, the outcome for middle class Indian women being that they have to negotiate contradictory discourses that position ideal femininity as both engaged in a globalised consumerist practice of material gratification and which eschews these practices for traditional, Indian values and femininity, that includes a culture of denial. Alcohol marketing and a youth culture of intoxication, which we have seen are interconnected in the West, have also come to India as part of globalisation and India's

economic deregulation. The urban middle classes who participate in India's culture of intoxication, thus do so within a set of global and local discourses and practices. But knowledge of these practices and sense making is extremely limited, and to date, no published study could be found, certainly none that examines these experiences through a gendered lens that postfeminist research in the UK and New Zealand suggests is useful and important to our understanding of drinking cultures (Griffin, 2006; Lyons *et al*, 2015).

The present study seeks to address this gap with an ethnographic fieldwork and interview study with a group of young, middle class urban Indian women who participate in the drinking cultures of Mumbai, the Mumbai night time economy (M-NTE). In doing so, it seeks to expand the "culture of intoxication" literature by developing an understanding of emerging markets, particularly those without a historical drinking culture. It also seeks to develop postfeminist literature given the importance of understanding the global consequences of a postfeminist sensibility (Evans & Riley, 2004) mainly an understanding of how it develops as it flows and ways it might be taken up in different cultures, including India, where the literature is underdeveloped. The current study addresses a gap in knowledge about the way that alcohol may be marketed to young Indian consumers, which will allow exploration of the way that neoliberal consumerism more generally and alcohol marketing specifically can work in a cultural context in which this kind of consumption may be problematised through local/national discourses. Finally, in taking up a multi-method ethnography of field notes and interviews, framed within a Foucauldian approach, the study is able to explore first person accounts in a situated context that includes the local discursive and material environment (e.g. how alcohol is marketed in particular spaces) and the wider socio-historical, political and economic contexts e.g. neoliberalism) that provides the back drop against which young people must negotiate their social and personal identities.

The aims of this study are therefore three fold:

1. Further understand the discursive and material practices in the way alcohol is sold and marketed in urban middle class drinking establishments in India, and the drinking cultures and practices that occur in these establishments, using Mumbai as an example.
2. Understand how young urban middle class Indians make sense of their participation in these drinking cultures, with a particular gender lens, to focus on women's experiences and how gender structures the possibilities and challenges of participating in drinking cultures for middle class Indian women.
3. Develop an analysis of these practices and sense making in a wider socio-historical and political context, so as to chart some of the way alcohol is marketed in emerging markets as part of globalisation.

With these aims in mind I therefore seek to address the following research question:

1. What are the material and discursive contexts in which middle class public drinking occurs in Mumbai?
2. How do young, middle class urban Indian women make sense of their participation in the Mumbai night time economy?
3. What are the conditions of possibility for this sense making? And what are the possibilities and tensions inherent in this sense making for what subjectivity and practice?

2. Method

Introduction

The current study, draws on sociology, anthropology and consumer literature in order to understand the complex and contradictory notions of women's participation in their respective drinking cultures. Alongside borrowing literature from other disciplines in order to inform my understanding and arguments, I have also been influenced by those disciplines methodological choices. My interest in the fields of sociology and anthropology have enabled me to use teachings (theory, practice and data collection methodologies) as a means for contextualising psychological phenomenon, in this case understanding a newly emerging drinking culture in India.

Theoretical framework

The current study is informed by a social constructionist approach to knowledge. I outline key characteristics of social constructionist informed work below: the first is a "critical stance towards taken for granted knowledge" (Burr, 1995, p.2). It challenges us as researchers against, "objectification of our social world [which] can lead us to assume that the way things are, is the way things should naturally be" (Moghaddam, 2005 cited in Niland *et al*, 2013, p.513). Those words resonated with me during this research process, and allowed me to look deeper and not take it at face-value, but question the ways in which meanings are constructed within the drinking culture of the M-NTE. The second social constructionist assumption which informed my study is that our understanding of our worlds are historically and socio-culturally specific (Burr, 1995; Gergen, 1973). This means our knowledge is situated and molded within the particular time frame and place we live in. Bruner (2008) suggests a long lasting "overall culture" in referring to this assumption and that the "overall culture" is institutionalised. Furthermore, this institutionalised culture includes the political, economic, technological, spiritual, intellectual, ideological and societal systems which are in place at any particular

time frame in history (Ibid). In the case of my study, this larger societal context is that of the Western neo-liberal ideology and the consequences it has when it begins to move towards the Eastern, post-colonial country of India. Furthermore, understanding these consequences in the context of the "project of the self" which is characterised by the neoliberal values of individualism, self-reliance, autonomy and the consumption driven lifestyles (Giddens, 1991; Rose, 1990; & Riley, Morey & Thompson, 2008). The assumptions outlined by a social constructionist applied to the topic of my study, "drinking culture" becomes particularly interesting in the case of India, which traditionally has not had a prominent drinking culture and where individualism and immediate gratification of consumerism may be positioned as un-Indian, in particularly problematic ways for Indian women.

The third characteristic of research that takes a social-constructionist approach is that it conceptualises knowledge as produced through social practices and that language is key to these social practices (Schutz, 1967; Burr, 2003). The focus here is on how we "enter into meaning" (Bruner, 1990), that is, how we use language to create an objective reality through complex meaning making of social processes, or as Burr (2003, p.7) describes it "when people talk together the world get constructed". In the case of the current study my participants engage in social processes which are a complex set of interconnected social processes that allow Western drinking practices to be situated within an Indianized context. In the case of drinking, an example of this may be the use of Western drinking terminology (e.g. shots) alongside local Indian slang (e.g. using the word "high" in reference to being drunk (see field notes for further discussion). Together, the characteristics of social constructionist work informed my methodological choices to use ethnography as a means to collect data and Foucauldian informed discourse analysis to analyse it. Below I detail the rationale that informed these choices.

Ethnography

"They have a culture out there and your job is to come back and tell us what it is" -
(Greetz, 1972, p.43)

The benefits and value of an ethnographic approach lies in its flexibility and adaptability which can be customised to fit the research agenda (Hine, cited in Pink, 2009). Christine Hine, a key figure within the ethnographic tradition, asserts this flexibility of the ethnographic approach enables us to create new methods and improve our reflexive understanding of the way in which knowledge operates within a certain context (Ibid). In the case of the present study, an ethnographic approach allowed me to collect and analyse data in a dynamic, yet rigorous fashion.

The current study aims to understand the way in which a Western practice is moving across to the East, including the role of new media such as social networks and social news sites (e.g. ScoopWhoop, akin to BuzzFeed). New media plays an important role in overcoming existing geographical boundaries (Farrell & Peterson, 2010), and as argued in the introduction, new media plays an important role in enabling businesses to connect with customers in diverse ways, allowing marketing efforts and marketing research to reach not only a wider audience but also to target specific demographics through complex marketing strategies that subtly and seamlessly integrate the online and offline (real world) spaces (Nicholls, 2012; Hastings, 2005; & McCreanor *et al.*, 2013).

The advantage to the ethnographic approach used in this thesis, is to explore the way that online and offline participant social interactions and sense making also interact with on and offline alcohol marketing. Although an ethnographic approach presents some potential problems when constantly moving from one site (online) to another (offline), these can be overcome by having a strong and clear theoretical orientation and by a clear strategy in terms of managing the sites (Burrowway, 2003; Fitzgerald, 2006). This ethnographic theoretical position also enables me to take a more anthropological and sociological approach to data collection and enabling a psychological line of inquiry that contextualises my participants sense making.

2.2.Design

The current study is qualitative in nature, employing in-depth interviews and participant observation in order to analyse young women's sense making of their participation in Mumbai's night time economy (M-NTE). Informed by postfeminist analysis of young women's drinking cultures in Western countries such as the UK and New Zealand, I conceptualise my participants' experiences within the larger neoliberal practices of commercial drinking in urban India (Mumbai) and focus on both the participants' understanding of their drinking culture and how to make sense of this understanding in the wider discursive and material context in which they find themselves that might have consequences for their participation that need to be negotiated and managed.

The study consisted of two phases, interviews and observations or nights out with a small and homogenous group of young 'middle-middle class' Indian women who participated in the (M-NTE). The in-depth study of this homogenous group allowed for a practical exploration of the social processes, which constitute the larger neoliberal, postfeminist framework in which I locate my participants. The in-depth interviews enabled me to gain insight into the subjective experiences of my participants, while the ethnographic observation which took place after the interviews provided not only real life context to my participants experiences, but also to gain a firsthand view of the Mumbai night time economy through my participants. By befriending the participants on Facebook I was also able to follow their on and offline drinking practices, thus observation occurs both on and off line (although, as discussed in the analysis, the semi-illicit nature of their drinking required many of them to keep this information away from family, this meant that, unlike their UK counterparts, little Facebook content explicitly showed their actual drinking practices, i.e. images of being intoxicated). A more detailed explanation of my participants and the interviews and observations are in the procedure section.

Procedure

Recruiting

Recruitment took place using word-of-mouth in order to first find a potential gatekeeper. Potential gatekeepers were approached on the basis of the likelihood of their friendship group agreeing to participate in the research. One potential gatekeeper was very enthusiastic and her friends agreed on participating in the research, this gatekeeper and her friends were sent the information pack, which consisted of the participant information sheet and consent form (see appendices A-B). After the electronic copy of the consent forms were returned, all participants were added as Facebook friends and I created a Facebook message group. Prior to adding me on Facebook, participants were given the opportunity to ask questions either through the gatekeeper who I had already added on Facebook or by directly contacting me through my e-mail or through a Skype conversation.

Participants

The research participants were five young women who frequented drinking establishments. Keeping in line with the work of Niland *et al.*, (2013) and Smizgin *et al.*, (2008), I classified "young" as between the ages of 18-25. Keeping within those age boundaries enables me to make comparisons between young Indian women of this study and research with participants in two countries with liberalised drinking policies which similar youth drinking cultures, namely the UK and New Zealand.

No.	Name	Age	Class	Location	Occupation
1.	Niki	24	Middle	Zone 3	Architecture Student
2.	Jenna	24	Lower Middle	Zone 2	Film Student

3.	Laëtitia	24	Middle	Zone 2	Architecture Student
4.	Emily	23	Middle	Zone 3	Psychology Student
5.	Bethany	24	Upper Middle	Zone 1	Architecture Student

Table 1. Participant details

Class for the purpose of the current study was based on the location of my participant's homes. The middle classes can be further divided into three categories (lower-middle, middle, and upper-middle) and are mainly categorized in financial terms and purchasing power (Oza, 2009). Additionally, the property prices in Mumbai vary greatly depending on the location (higher in the south) and thus is a good indication of the class (as defined by purchasing power) in that particular area. The correlation between locations and its inhabitants informed my categorisation of class. Having grown up in Mumbai allowed me to gauge classes within Oza's definition more efficiently.

In-depth semi structured Interviews

"Conversations with a purpose" (Holloway, 1997, p.94) is an appropriate way of looking at semi-structured, open-ended interviews. After arriving in Mumbai, I asked the gatekeeper if she and her friends who had agreed to participate in the research could meet up with me in order to give them an opportunity to get to know me and as a way to build rapport prior to the individual interviews. I began the meeting by outlining my main research focus and the research process along with which I also informed them my schedule for my time in Mumbai. I also informed them about their confidentiality and anonymity, that it would be protected through this process and that they could withdraw at any point. There is a difference between physical access and social access, the aim for the first meeting was not only to get physical access to the group, but engaging with them in a relaxed social setting allowed me to get to know them and thus also gain social access (Lee, 1993, p.123).

After the initial meeting the participants agreed to individual interviews and my offline

(physical world) participant observation (below). The interviews were arranged depending on the participants schedules and were merged with the observation phase. The individual interviews were conducted at a place of convenience, which was normally a coffee shop or in the lobby of their residential buildings. The interviews began with asking them broad questions, which mainly focused on ways in which they navigated through their drinking and social environments. These questions enabled me to understand which parts of the city they frequented and more generally their leisure activities. The interview guide consisted of questions about participant's social activities (drinking and others), night life in Mumbai and were adapted from (Niland, 2013; and Mackiewicz, 2012) and altered to fit an Indian context. The main aim of the individual interviews was to gain insight into the ways in which my participants were making sense of and managing their drinking practices. (see Appendix no. 5 for interview schedule).

Observations

I had a period of four weeks with which to conduct my Mumbai fieldwork. During my first group meeting I asked the participants if I could "tag along" with them to drinking establishments. This suggestion was received with great enthusiasm and they agreed to call/ message me when they were going drinking. I was invited several times during this four week period, and took every opportunity presented by them to go along to drinking establishments, and in this sense my observation was mainly participatory.

The majority of these invitations were in the late afternoon (after university lectures) and a few were on weekend nights. They were mainly located in particular parts of the city which I labeled Zones 2 and 3 (see analysis section). I visited around 2-4 establishments per week mostly with individual participants and some of their friends, in total I had four participant observations during this time. During these observations, I interacted with my participant's friends and drank with them (not to drunkenness), I also interacted with other customers in the establishments and also with bar staff. These interactions allowed me to develop a better understanding of middle class drinking cultures in Mumbai, however, it is only my consented participants' views that I present in the current study.

During my participant observations, my focus was to engage with my participants and their friends and the wider drinking community within the establishments, I kept mental notes of aspects that particularly stood out and were not in line with my Indian literature. The observation mainly involved conversations about their drinking experiences and the exchange of drinking stories we shared. This allowed me to gain insight into the similarities and differences in the drinking experiences and also inform and contextualise my participants' sense-making. On returning home after a participant observation I spent time writing detailed notes about my experiences from the day and the analysis of these inform my analysed field notes (see analysis section).

In addition to the participant observations, my fieldwork also incorporated observations and conversations with people in consumer locations (shopping malls) and also taxi drivers and other locals who were outside the middle classes but lived and worked in the city. The rationale here was to get an insight into the larger impact of globalisation and consumerism on the city and how these changes were being interpreted and experienced by the residents. This information was used to help me think about the context in which my participants operated.

Analytical Strategy

As noted above, a social constructionist approach informed the way I thought about my study, and I used it to enable me to approach my data in particular ways that focused on identifying meaning making; the consequences for subjectivity and practice of this meaning making; and the socio-historical context that provides the conditions of possibility for this sense making. This enabled me to develop a psychological line of inquiry, whilst drawing on different disciplines including sociology, marketing and political science in order to analyse young women's drinking experiences and to understand the emerging drinking culture in India. The psychological interpretation of identity and subjectivity within a rapidly changing globalised middle class is thus at the core of the present study.

The following steps were used to analyse my data and address my research aims.

1. I used Facebook to get to know my participants and to get a sense of how they used the platform for drinking purposes and the content relating to drinking, this informed my understanding of the strategic marketing in the case of Mumbai. I was also able to get a sense of the semi-illicit nature of drinking for these young women, who had to be careful that not all their family could see their full social life on Facebook. This allowed me to see the subtle ways in which my participants spoke about alcohol on Facebook. However, as a result there was not much data to analyse. During my fieldwork in Mumbai I saw how alcohol companies marketing strategies merge the offline and the online in subtle ways making it difficult to analyse in-depth drinking within an online space. These two factors (subtle/little mention of alcohol and blurring of on and offline marketing) led to the decision to amalgamate all my observations (on and offline) into one analysis (see field notes analysis below).

2. During my time in Mumbai I wrote up observations as described in the section above (for descriptive field notes from the field see, Appendix no. 6). To analyse all my field notes (on and offline notes) as a data set I developed an analytic strategy from consumer studies and grounded my analysis through the work of Gerard Hastings (2005) and James Nicholls (2012), from which I developed the following steps:

Stage 1 - Spent first few days familiarising myself with the various drinking locations (i.e. to get a sense of the geographical scale)

Stage 2 - Immersed myself in the field, focusing on important patterns that emerged from my participant observations and my own

Stage 3 - Read through consumer and marketing literature and comparing those to my findings from the field

Stage 4 - Using the insight from stage 3 to understand ways in which my participants drinking behaviours mapped on to the framework of the M-NTE I have created.

3. In the third phase I analysed the interviews. I drew on Willig's (2001) Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) to identify key steps. FDA is compatible with a social constructionist approach, and is not so much a strict method as a tool box: "I would like my books to be a kind of tool-box which others can rummage through to find a tool which they can use however they wish in their own area. I write for users, not readers" (Foucault, cited in O'Farrell, 2005, p. 50). In line with the invitation to use FDA flexibly to address the specific aims of a research project, and mindful of my aims which focused on understanding sense making in its wider context, I therefore focused on the following steps outlined by Willig (2001) (leaving out, for example, the action orientation step that is more concerned with how things are said than why).

Stage 1 - Identifying the discursive object - Drinking

Stage 2 - Understanding the different ways in which the object was constructed (e.g. part of globalised identity)

Stage 3 - Analysing the socio-historical conditions of possibility that enables these different ways of making sense of the world (e.g. neoliberal consumption driven self-improvement)

Stage 4 - Considering the consequences for subjectivity and practice for my participants in using this sense-making (e.g. the tensions between modern practices of drinking against the traditional notions of Indian femininity)

Ethical considerations

The current project was approved by the Aberystwyth University Department of Psychology ethics committee (accepted on 11/11/14). (See Appendix no. 1 for ethics application). Below I have outlined the ethical considerations of the potential harms to the participants and the researcher, followed by my ethical considerations about my ethnographic fieldwork and interviews.

The participants' consent was sought in two stages, the first stage involved receiving consent from the "gatekeeper". The ethics form was sent electronically to the gatekeeper along with the information sheet. After the "gatekeeper" had read and

informed her friends about the study, the next stage was carried out "in the field" in Mumbai (14/02/2015 - 12/03/2015). I provided each participant with consent forms and information sheets, which they read and signed (Appendix no. 2). In terms of any queries of issues that may have been brought up by my participants, they were given the opportunity to ask me about them in both stage one and two. In stage one they had the opportunity to get in touch with me either through e-mail or Skype and ask me personally during my fieldwork in stage two. During stage one (whilst still in the UK) I received consent to observe and document information from my participants Facebook pages. Participants had approximately three months before the time they received the consent and information forms and were informed they could get in touch with me anytime throughout this period. A similar format was followed in relation to their right to withdraw from the study.

In terms of other potential harms to my participants, the participants' safety was extremely important for me, given the cultural circumstance of young women meeting a male researcher in a study about their drinking culture. Although I did not inquire as to the level of detail they provided to their family about the study, I strongly urged them to inform a family member or a friend prior to our meetings. Additionally, in terms of my safety, I informed a family member who facilitated my commute to meetings with participants. I was also extremely careful not to discuss the research in any public space on their Facebook pages, so that the participants did not have to account for me or their participation in my research. In terms of the benefits to the participants, they found the process of engaging with a researcher who was Indian and comfortable in their environment in terms of being familiar with Mumbai, Indian culture, and a British or British-influenced drinking culture rewarding and showed great interest in the project. This exchange of conversations and experiences appeared to be a benefit in, and of itself, and participants were informed they would be sent a copy of the project upon its completion.

Reflexivity

I begin this section with a brief explanation of my reflexive position within the current research. I consider the impact my age, gender, class and other dynamics which may have had an impact on my relationship with my participants and my larger fieldwork experience. Together, these considerations and reflections have had an impact on my personal sense making of this project. Furthermore, personally these experiences have had a profound and almost life-altering impact on my "project of myself" as a researcher and a person.

The ethnographic field, "is an arena for intersubjective interaction" (Paerregaard, 2000, p.351). In considering my reflexive position Kusow points out, "The researcher's status emerges from the interaction between the researcher and the participants as well as the social and political situation within which the interaction occurs" (Kusow, 2003, p. 597). A key consideration which needs to be addressed in fully comprehending Kusow's quote is that of the "insider-outsider" dichotomy. A researcher may be considered an "insider" because of his ties with the field and the community and people in that field (Ergun & Erdemir, 2010). The insider position is one normally of a researcher conducting research in his own country or community and its benefits are the ease of access and the shared knowledge of the environment, However, it may also include disadvantages, for example, the shared knowledge might mean participants accounts are based on certain assumptions both the participant and researcher have in common (Ibid). Similarly the "outsider" position also has its advantages and disadvantages, however, I take Ergun and Erdemir suggestion of considering "insider-outsider" in a more fluid fashion and not as a binary dichotomy. I was born in a lower-middle class area of Mumbai (the area I call Zone 3 in my field notes analysis), it is where I spent the majority of my childhood. At the age of 15 my family re-located to Hong Kong (my country of domicile), I attended a British international school in Hong Kong and I have spent the last 5 years of my life at University in the UK which I consider my second home (irrespective of my increasingly uncertain student visa requirements). As Ergun and Erdemir have titled their article, my position of a critical psychology researcher for the current project was one of an "insider" in a foreign land and an "outside" in my homeland (Ergun & Erdemir, 2010). It is with

this position that I made sense of, not only my participants but also my ethnographic field experience. Furthermore, it also reinforced my views of the larger globalisation trends in Mumbai and the gradual move of a neoliberal model of citizenship in India (I was born in 1992 and consumer goods that came with globalisation were a new phenomenon during my childhood).

Keeping the above "insider-outsider" dynamic in mind, my relationship with my participants was a unique one. I approached them as a research student who was very interested in the new drinking "scene" emerging in Mumbai. Although we shared common knowledge about the city, this was a completely new phenomenon for me as my experiences of drinking cultures is from my time in Hong Kong and my life as an undergraduate student in the UK. In this regard, I managed to find a beneficial balance between advantages and disadvantages which come from being an "insider" and my position as a "Western" or outside researcher aiming to understanding a cultural practice (drinking).

In regards to other factors such as age and class, I was the same age as my participants, which I consider an advantage in terms of the data collection process which involved interviews and my interactions with them during my fieldwork. However, the synthesising and theorising of this research topic was a very rewarding challenge. I had to put myself in the a position of an "academic researcher" with the aim of understanding a social phenomena by standing "outside" and looking "inside" practices of my own peer group (both the UK and India). In terms of dynamics of class, which were easier to negotiate and manage. My position of coming from a lower-middle class locality in Mumbai was masked by the fact I was a Western researcher, which benefitted me in my field experience of the more affluent parts of Mumbai, whilst it simultaneous allowed me to establish rapport with my participants from Zone 3 areas.

It is important here, to discuss my reflexivity in terms of the gender dynamics between myself and my participants. In the analysis I describe the complex nature of the ways in which my participants have to negotiate their contact with men, both friends and strangers. Again, my insider-outsider dynamic was seen as a beneficial one, which allowed my participants and I to develop a relationship of trust. Their comfort level around me alongside their enthusiasm to participate and fully engage with the process

was another indication of a positive gender dynamic between us. Below, I consider several factors which may be seen as important in fostering this positive relationship. In the initial familiarity phase of the research, my actions and motives were extremely transparent and information and details, were provided promptly. Additionally, the logistics of my interaction with my participants further developed trust, decisions of meeting times and places were largely left up to the participants and for them to discuss as a group their availability. Finally, the gate-keeper being a friend of mine allowed further trust. On meeting the participants for the first time, it was clear their biggest concern was that I was going to consider their drinking as problematic, when they realized this was not the case, they were enthusiastic to take part.

Looking deeper into the concept of “otherness”, I felt my position of empathetic and understanding researcher, with knowledge on women’s issues surrounding drinking in the West created a certain familiarity between myself and the group. I do not know their initial response to this, however, but by the end of the process, I began to notice, they considered this a “similarity” between us which took the form of humour when a participant referred to me as “one of the girls”. In this context my insider-outsider appeared to enable a connection: I was different enough not to be categorised as a man whose masculinity needed to be negotiated, in that I was not seen as a threat by their males friends and/or boyfriends. Additionally, my personal attributes of being a social person, along with my position as someone who was born Mumbai but hadn’t lived there in a while enabled me to drink with them and be accepted in the group without them being too self-conscious.

Finally, The impact of this project on me as a researcher/ individual has been profound. My personal experiences of growing up in Mumbai and going back there after three years were extremely emotional. However, at the same time, my position as a Western researcher aiming to understand the move of a "culture of intoxication" style British drinking culture was a fascinating and a great research opportunity that could not be missed. Furthermore, the project enabled me to channel and engage my larger philosophical issues surrounding identity and nationality in an extremely constructive way through academic inquiry.

3. Analysis of participant observations and field notes.

To address the first research question and better understand the material and discursive context in which the participants drank, I explored what the spaces where my participants drank were like, how drinking was constructed and marketed, and what people did and drank in these spaces.

Spaces of consumption: Mapping out the Mumbai night time economy (M-NTE)

What the spaces my participants frequented had in common was that women were welcome at any time (other kinds of bars did not have women after eleven pm for their own safety as the drunk male clientele could not be trusted to behave appropriately), and that each establishment had a bouncer creating a barrier to entry that gave both a sense of security for the female participants and a sense of exclusivity. These places also had waiters, integrated technology and social media (for example, ipads given to customers to order drinks, images of which could be then uploaded directly onto Facebook) and a strong play theme, so that alcohol was only ever part of the experience.

These spaces were distinguished by the demographic to which they catered (based on age and disposable income); and by the time of day that they were frequented. These distinctions created three different kinds of common drinking venues: ones that were more like student unions, playing loud pop music, with relatively cheap drinks and frequented by students (approx. 18-22 years) in the early evening; the same places frequented later in the evening or more upmarket expensive places that were frequented by young professionals or older students like my participants (approx. 22-25 years); and other places that had a stronger focus on food, but which also had a 'staying on' drinks menu, which had an older middle class clientele. These places were also distinguished by

their geographical location in Mumbai and if they were covert or overt (covert being for example, positioned at the top of a shopping mall). During my fieldwork I began to see clear distinctions between three areas in Mumbai in which drinking occurred, which I called Zones 1, 2 and 3 (see figure 1 below). The participants however, did not distinguish their drinking places in terms of location within the city. Although proximity to home was a concern they talked about, their movement within these three Zones was fluid (see Fig. 1). However, from an analyst's perspective the three Zones had specific key characteristics that made categorizing them this way useful in understanding the material contexts in which the participants drank. For example, the locations of the drinking establishments are more obvious or subtle depending on the Zone in which they are located, the promotion of Westernised drinking practices are also calculated to suit the regional demographic. I therefore start this section of the analysis with a description of the three Zones.

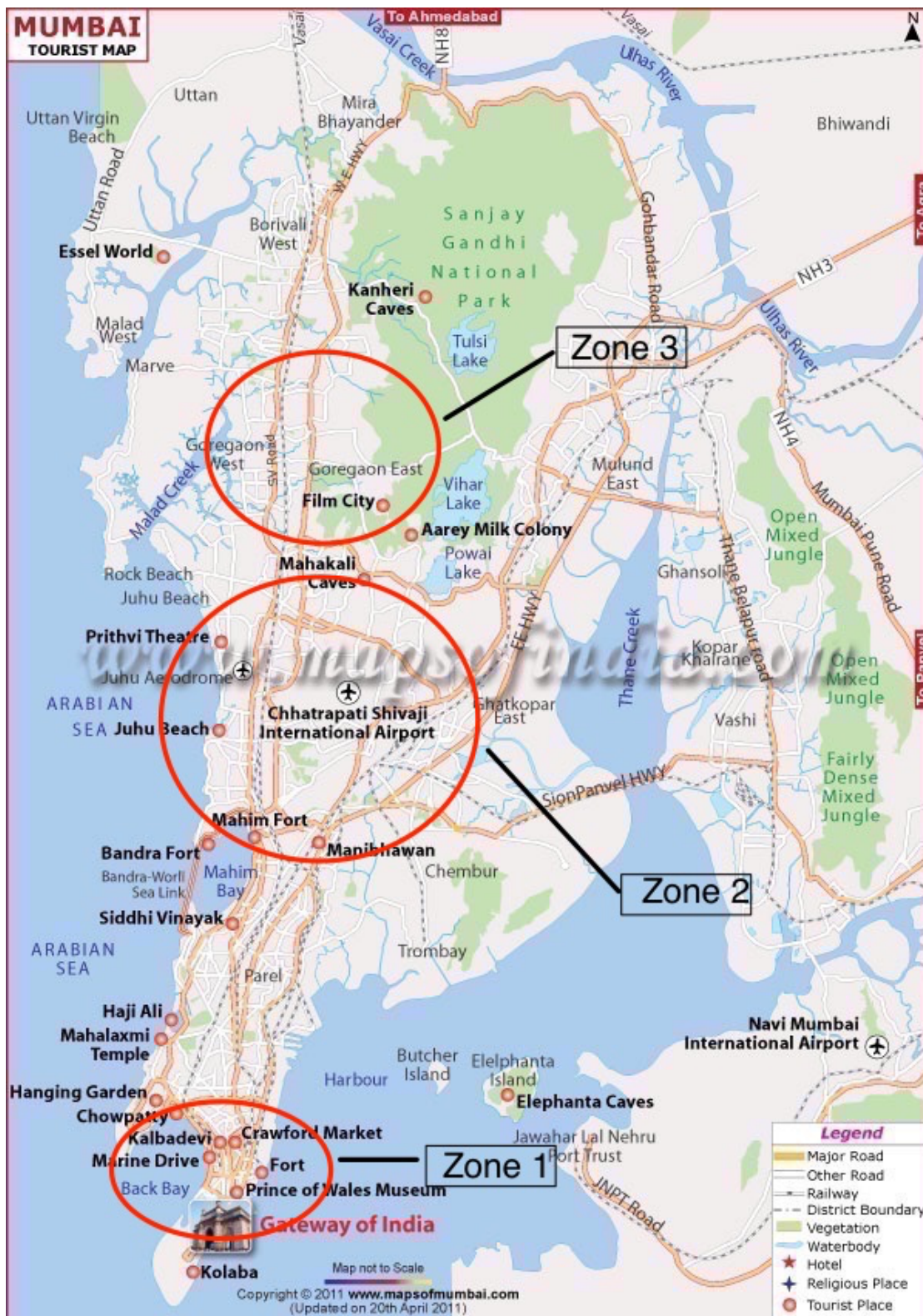


Fig. 1. Map of Mumbai. Red Circles indicate areas within where ethnographic fieldwork was conducted.

Zone 1

Mumbai, unlike many cities in the UK does not have a specific "city centre"; however Zone 1 would come closest to our understanding of a "city centre". It consists of several tourist attractions and several housing societies for different communities, such as the army quarters, and the Parsi community, among others. Zone 1 is the main financial centre of Mumbai and comprises mostly of government offices. In terms of drinking establishments, it mainly caters for tourists and high-end corporate and business clients - it was not frequented by my participants. However, this area is an important site as most international music, film and sports events take place here.

Considering the business clients of the establishments of this Zone, my participants did not frequently visit this Zone. However, with one of my participants residing in this Zone, attending gigs and other events in this area became more accessible as other participants would stay with her. As such these establishments were a novelty for my participants and were saved for special occasions. I believe the reason behind this could be that these areas are safer, due to the large influx of tourists and hence more security. In this way issues of the commute to Zone 1 are a trade-off for a more liberal approach to drinking practiced by both the establishments and local authorities so as to attract the tourist clientele. During my time in Mumbai, I did not have a chance to visit an establishment in this Zone with my participants, however, on visiting them on my own I found the ambience to be very different from the establishments in Zones 2 and 3, with the alcohol list catering to mainly older working professionals. The establishments here were split between those to attract business events and tourists; with establishments attracting tourists themed in stereotypically Indian decor (e.g. waiters wearing traditional clothes and pictures of rickshaws and elephants). Additionally, these places generally did not play loud music and did not explicitly advertise shots or alcopops with most of its patrons drinking either wine or beer. Finally, these places were significantly more expensive than those in Zones 2 and 3.

Zone 2

A UK comparison for Zone 2 would be that of an affluent city in the South of England (e.g. Bristol). The area mainly consists of the upper-middle class segment, including many artists and actors. It consists of media companies and Bollywood production studios and is in very close proximity to film city (Bollywood sets, which I have included in Zone 3). Zone 2 also has many major university college campuses. Zone 2 often had overtly situated establishments that were populated by the affluent middle class. Overtly situated establishments make the assumption that their customers have experienced Western drinking practices and cater to provide a replica of Western drinking at home. Overt establishments are very popular among young people as travelling abroad for education has dramatically increased in popularity and availability for middle class students. Overt establishments promote a university town or student union type of drinking environment.

Most of my participants lived between Zones 2 and 3 and Zone 2 was a very popular drinking destination. My participants spoke very fondly of Zone 2, as most of them had their first drink here, and spent time here as junior college students (18-22 years). This area was a place for my participants to establish themselves as a transitional group between the university union style establishments and the more elegant and expensive establishments which I consider places for young people with disposable incomes. Although these places were expensive, they had various different happy hour schemes which allowed my participants to visit them frequently as according to them, they had “out-grown” the university style establishments. Depending on the time of the day and my participant’s financial situation, they bounced between these two main kinds of establishments in Zone 2 and often planned nights out depending on the offers and special nights (live music) of the more elegant establishments.



Fig. 2. Interior of the Little Door.

Zone 3

A UK comparison to Zone 3 would be a place within the midlands (E.g. Birmingham, Wolverhampton). This area is categorised as a lower-middle to middle class area. It mainly consists of first and second generation families who have relocated to Mumbai in search of better jobs. The affordable property prices and the recent influx of multinational call centre offices in Zone 3 has made Zone 3 a desirable place for lower-middle class families. As a result of these global companies there is a large number of shopping malls catering towards the lower-middle to middle-middle classes, and as such they feature adverts, which too are tailored for that demographic. Oza (2009) points out the rationale here is "having Western luxuries at home" (p. 6) (Fig. 2). Zone 3 is the location of several

covert establishments; these drinking establishments are situated in shopping malls and other retail establishments.

Establishments in this Zone are characterised by their “restaurant & bar” layout, wherein the drinks menu was normally offered up after the meal or as an accompaniment to the meal. These establishments also implemented creative ways of incorporating alcoholic beverages into their food (e.g. Vodka penne). The common thread within the establishments in Zone 3 was a very clear attempt at “staying on for drinks after dinner” and to create an atmosphere wherein people who were new the drinking culture were more likely to try, in the managers words; “something new”. Establishments often displayed exotic pictures of people drinking in foreign locations and one establishment even include several humorous quotes about alcohol and drinking. Although my participants did not visit these establishments very often, they were often visited during what my participants referred to as a “chill night”, which may be due to the proximity of these establishments to their home and the affordable prices. These establishments did not organise any kind of happy hours but their drink related offers were strategically tied into their meal deals.



Fig. 3. Oberoi Mall (Zone 3) - Phillips fryer advert - Western appliances to make samosas.



Fig. 4. Billboard opposite Oberoi Mall (Zone 3) - Further reinforcing the middle class narrative of Western consumption, in this case tied to social mobility.



Fig. 5. Exterior of the British Brewing Company, or (BBC) as it is referred to, is situated on the top floor of Oberoi Mall (Zone 3).

The above Zones give a sense of the kinds of bars the participants frequented. What is also important to know is that for the participants, their experience was of new bars ‘popping’ up on a regular basis. This meant that other than when they first started drinking and went to the more student oriented bars as ‘regulars’, they did not have a regular bar but instead participated in what was experienced as an exciting social life that involved finding out about a new trendy bar and trying it out, since all new bars had a theme or set of activities related to the theme that made them fun. See for example, discussion of the Stock Exchange below. Spaces of consumption were thus experienced as fluid and temporal even though housed in specific buildings and city locations.

Construction and marketing of alcohol

The two aspects I discuss below are the marketing and construction of drinking in these places that I identify; the way alcohol itself was constructed, in such a way that it was not an object in its own right but to be enjoyed as a part of an experience or theme that was

distinct to that establishment. Alcohol was marketed in ways that blurred online and offline spaces. In the Western context these lines are significantly blurred and an attempt to separate or distinguish between online marketing and offline marketing has been rejected in favour of understanding as a whole. Such work has shown the way that, for example, images of a night out are uploaded onto Facebook and discussed after the event, or the way that sponsored events encourage image sharing on platforms like twitter (Niland *et al.*, 2013; Hastings, 2005; Nicholls, 2012). However, in the case of Mumbai, I discovered early on in my fieldwork, the fluidity with which new establishments seemed to pop up and ones which had been there for a few years were no longer “in fashion”. These relatively recent developments within M-NTE, enabled me to trace the ways in which offline marketing efforts were being taken online and vice-versa. This kind of an ethnographic understanding of the drinking landscape, I consider to be unique to my fieldwork of Mumbai, and allowed me to extrapolate different variables of marketing strategies which were blurred within a British context. I present below an analysis of the M-NTE, incorporating the affordances of online and offline marketing embodied by the establishments. I use extracts from my field notes, which provided an ongoing narrative to my sense making of the B-NTE in the field.

In the establishments my participants frequented alcohol was never the sole focus, instead alcohol was mixed with activities. In the case of the covert establishments this was implemented through considering drinks menu as a “stay on” to the dinner, which enabled these establishments to introduce alcohol to some of their newer clients whilst still maintaining their primary roles as restaurants. As an example, The British Brewing Company (BBC) (covertly situated, Zone 3) (Fig.4) aims to introduce their customers to Westernised drinking practices in more subtle ways compared to the more overtly situated establishments. During my visit, I was approached by the manager who asked me if I would like a shot. After I declined, he pointed at a quote on the wall (generic quote about drinking) and urged me one last time, “sir, but it's a Saturday night!” After I declined again and he left, I called him back and asked him if this type of sales pitch was something that he does out of his own volition or if it was a requirement of his job. He responded saying it was a bit of both, however, when asked how many times he gets a positive reply (I asked the question in Hindi, as people in urban Mumbai try and speak in

English as much as possible, but speaking in Hindi suggested to him that I was asking him not as a customer but as a friend), he responded by telling me that the BBC is a family-friendly themed pub and so he tries to get people to try these things, i.e. shots.



Fig. 6. Advertisement for Absolute Vodka. Titled Absolute Kher.

Alongside, alcohol being an extension of food, the themes and activities planned by the establishments themselves placed alcohol as a means to enjoy the experience and participate in these activities. These implicitly tied alcohol consumption with social fun. While UK establishments occasionally make some effort in order to increase sales of alcoholic drinks, for example they may send bar staff with a tray of shots to serve seated clients or those away from the bar, this form of excessive drinking is a commonplace youth practice, independent of the establishment. However, this has been taken to a new level in Mumbai, wherein, the overt establishments organise events and activities that

revolve around the consumption of alcohol. As an example, from my fieldwork - The Little Door (overtly situated, Zone 2) encourages its customers to participate in Western drinking practices in more explicit ways by organising a drinking boat race (team relay of quick drinking). The winning team wins a prize and has their picture put up on the walls - it is interesting to note that there were fewer than ten women on an entire wall covered in pictures. The celebration of Western public holidays, which are not typically celebrated in India, such as St. Patrick's Day, was also promoted by several overtly situated pubs in Zones 1 and 2. The narrative surrounding these adverts often revolved around the idea of celebration and participation in Western holidays, which was a method used to increase sales of specific alcohol from that region (e.g. Guinness for St. Patrick's Day). *Fig. 7. Interior and Exterior of the Little Door (Zone 2).* Finally, marketing of alcohol carefully promoted the sale of Westernised drinks and drinking practices and effectively juxtaposed them with Indianised drinks. One example of this was "spicy shots" whereas in another establishment it involved taking a very familiar Western brand and associating it with common Indian last names (e.g. Absolute Seth). This meant that Western drinks could be made more familiar with Indian names and flavours whilst also keeping with the notion of the idealised Western alcohol consumption. While establishments which were trying to re-create a university style drinking maintained a largely Western drinks menu, other establishments in Zone 2, which were more covert, Indianised their drinks, in order to make them more familiar to their demographic.



Fig. 8. Service staff. Here to get you smashed

The above section highlights the manner in which alcohol was marketed in smart ways, depending on the location and demographic. These strategies allowed alcohol being constructed as, although not the main point of focus in most establishments, as something that was an important aspect of a meal and a lubricant to social and fun themes and activities. Additionally, it was something that was Indianised strategically to balance its perception, or what Oza points out as globalised consumer goods being “a Western luxury at home” (Oza, 2009.p. 6). The above strategies also enabled the establishments and alcohol industry to deal with the middle class(es) anxiety surrounding issues of the un-Indian nature of alcohol consumption. After looking into the ways in which alcohol was marketed in an offline space, below is discussed the ways in which establishments managed their online marketing strategies. I mainly focus on two establishments which

did this particularly well and aggressively, The BBC (Zone 3) and Bar Stock Exchange (Zone 2). I have attempted to separate the offline and online components of the marketing strategies, which has enabled me to comprehend the actual drinking practices and the role marketing plays in not only facilitating them but also creating them. However, as McCreanor *et al.*, (2013) point out, online marketing strategies are adding to "the reach, speed and efficiency with which pro-alcohol messages are spread and entrenched as norms and practices among peer-groups" (p.10). Furthermore, these marketing efforts are highly effective and powerful within new technologies, and keeping with Hastings' and Nicholls' suggestions and findings it is important to contextualise the role of social media in relation to the above drinking practices in Mumbai.

In the case of online marketing strategies, there was a clear attempt to integrate the online and offline marketing, whilst considering the ways the consumption of alcohol is perceived depending on the demographic and the covert and overt nature of the establishments themselves.

“After my first interview, my participant invited me for a drink with a friend at The British Brewing Company (The BBC). It’s a restaurant with the décor of a traditional British pub. Although that’s what they are going for its contrasted with modern and sophisticated service and although it feels like being in a pub, an experienced pub-goer might be confused at first. You wait outside till they get you a table and on arriving at your table a waiter comes up with an iPad, which he leaves on the table. All orders are to be made from this tablet. As I was placing my order and getting to grips with this iPad in a “British pub” a photographer came up and asked if we’d like to get a picture together. My participant and I got our picture taken and then the photographer said, I could look it up on their Facebook page. After placing my order a message popped up on the iPad asking me if I’d like to “Share” on Facebook. I found this a bit strange, however, as I looked around me everyone was taking pictures of their food and drink. This photo and share things on Facebook was standard practice but it was done creatively and differed depending on the establishment. Thus, a consumer is constantly engaging with social media, having fun with it and it socially serves two purposes. The first, is of telling people you were at the establishment the second, becoming a part of an exclusive group who

'found out' about the place before it became mundane and not 'like-worthy'. Apart from the obvious reasons of seeming 'cool' and gaining social and digital capital" - Extract from field notes.

The above extract describes the use of an iPad, which alongside incentivising online engagement is a direct way to tie the offline drinking experience to the online space. The incorporation of modern technology in the establishment itself created an atmosphere which makes sharing, following and liking images of the establishment and drinks not only more acceptable but also desired. Below I highlight another example, which extends the idea of sharing drinking experiences further.

"Bar Stock Exchange takes the "share" aspect of The BBC and other places and makes it a fun game. The idea is simple, and it has been done in the UK, except in Mumbai, the social media component really merges great advertising with using technology to create a certain drinking experience. Drink prices change, as do commodity prices on the stock market. Once the price of a drink drops there is a mad rush to get to the bar; this partially emulates the frantic atmosphere of the stock exchange. I was amazed to find people sitting at their seats when prices dropped and this was because they had an app which not only had the "rates" but they could also place their order with it. I now saw what the fuss was all about, my participants had seen their friends with these apps on their phones, this app goes live when the bar is open and so even if you're not there, you know how cheap certain drinks can be" - Extract from field notes.

The ways in which social media is integrated into the drinking experience within the M-NTE is highly commercial and innovative. In the case of the West, young people's use of Facebook involves posting their personal pictures and sharing their stories about the "excessive consumption", which is in turn shared with the alcohol companies through "hashtags" and posted on their Facebook page. This material is consequently re-used by alcohol companies as advertising material (Nicholls, 2012). Indian youth engage with Facebook as a means of displaying their affinity to the alcohol brands and not necessarily the drinking practice itself. The emphasis is placed on "checking-in" to certain upmarket

establishments, with the pictures and hashtags reflecting the brands of alcohol. This kind of engagement with the brand could be an indication of the traditional socio-historical stigma attached to drinking in India, alongside the increasing importance placed on Western consumption as a means for the middle class(es) to establish and maintain their position within the larger Indian society (Chowdhary, 2009). While the drinking practices and drinks promoted by the establishments and the larger alcohol companies in Mumbai, are a way to promote British drinking practices, from the point of view of the middle class(es), the establishments enable an interaction with international brands, which is an important part of the increasingly global consumer culture (Ibid). Furthermore, the way in which these drinking activities are coupled with Indian cultural points of reference (e.g. Absolute Seth) creates a feeling of closeness and proximity with the brands, which become very desirable to the middle class(es). This is in part due to the importance placed on Western consumption as a means of achieving the material benefits of globalisation, but also because of the intricately linked relationship between consumption-driven lifestyles choices and improvement within a neoliberal rhetoric (Riley, Thompson & Griffin 2010). After looking into the construction of drinking and the marketing strategies within both offline and online spaces, below I focus on the actual drinking patterns of my participants and my observations of drinking more generally across the establishments.

Drinking practices

The M-NTE for my participants was mainly about trying new establishments which were opening at a very high frequency in Mumbai, with not many places becoming their regular drinking establishments in the long term. The frequency of “going out” for most of my participants was about 3-5 days a week, however, the “big nights out” which were characterised by binge drinking and staying out after the curfew needed to be planned more carefully and were less frequent (an average of once or twice a month). Most drinking sessions were carefully calculated depending on proximity to home and in accordance with their curfews, furthermore, afternoon and early evening were preferred. These times allowed my participants to not only get home on time but also make the most

of the happy hour offers in the more high- end establishments in Zone 2.

In considering my participants drinking, they talked about a developmental trajectory in that the current phase of visiting new and exciting establishments and keeping up with the trendy places was different from when they were younger. They talked about when most of them first started drinking during junior college (18-22 years) and frequently visited the university style establishments which were located in Zone 2. During my fieldwork, they mentioned feeling out of place in these establishments now and preferring to visit the more high-end places, with the main demographic consisting of young professionals with disposable incomes. In terms of amount of alcohol consumed, my participants preferred to try new kinds of alcohol, such as cocktails and designer beers and with the exception of a few did not enjoy hard liqueurs (e.g. rum, whiskey).

In conclusion, most of my participants, did not drink to intoxication regularly, however, they did drink frequently. This frequency can be attributed to the constantly developing night-life in Mumbai and the trend to visit new establishments before anyone else. Being seen in new places and actively seeking out these new places was important for my participants. This aspect of the M-NTE is where social media was of importance as it not only enabled my participants to stay up to date with establishments but more importantly allowed them to use the “check in” feature to show they had been there. The lack of images of actual nights out, unlike my participants British counterparts, was in some form replaced by other subtle affordances of the social media platform and hence despite not having many pictures of nights out, there was a lot of activity on the events and locations pages. The concept of using social media for sharing their participation in the drinking culture remains the same as their Western counterparts, however, they need to be a bit more subtle given the presence of family on their friends list. My understanding of this through talking to people is that the locations and the events pages are not very obvious to a non-digital native (i.e. parents) and as long as there are no explicit pictures of people being intoxicated its acceptable.

In conclusion, my analysis shows the M-NTE to be a complex space in which alcohol companies are able to strategically position images in order to promote a "culture of intoxication" type of drinking culture. I interpret this is that it is a series of "marketing

stages", and the current stage is one that might be characterised as 'softening up the market', given the anxieties around consumerism as non-Indian and alcohol understood as a Western consumerist product, alcohol is marketed not as a means to itself but a route into a fun, high status life for young people who buy into globalisation and something that is an extension of Indian culture for those who are less engaged in drinking cultures. Technological developments play an important role and are effectively integrated into the drinking experience. While pictures and multimedia content of actual drinking practices is not prominent within the M-NTE economy, the use of social media is highly commercialised and modern. I would argue that the ways in which users engage with social media within the M-NTE is effectively tied into developing a strong marketing strategy which is tailored to an Indian demographic, with a strong focus being on brands and being seen as at certain establishments. To demonstrate this I have looked at the following; a) spaces of consumption, the geographical location, the styles and the ways in which establishments are overt or covert about their drinking practices and marketing, b) the ways in which drinking is constructed, and marketing which is an important ingredient to fun and socialising, which is global in its appeal yet Indianised to make it more acceptable. Finally, I have briefly described the way in which my participants navigate around the M-NTE and their drinking practices. In terms of its marketing, I have looked at ways in which offline marketing seamlessly crosses over to the online sphere and the ways in which the alcohol marketing within the M-NTE is more commercial and consumer oriented than that of the B-NTE, however it is tailored so as to not obviously portray explicit images or content of people drinking to intoxication. Participants themselves are more subtle about their social media usage with having to find the balance between being active in the M-NTE taking the form of "check-ins" to establishments and "liking" event pages and not displaying any illicit images of them being intoxicated. My field notes highlight a clear alcohol pedagogy with the complex interplay of marketing within the online and offline space and mapping out of the M-NTE the following section goes on to look at interview data from my participants to understand how they make sense of their participation in the M-NTE.

4. Interview Analysis

My Foucauldian discourse analysis of the participant interviews identified three different discourses through which drinking was constructed. These were as part of a new global identity, as a gendered and sometimes unsafe space for women, and as an ‘impossible space’ that required the negotiation of contradictory subject positions and expectations. Below I outline how participants mobilized these discourses, concentrating on the socio-historical conditions of possibility that enabled these different ways of making sense of the world and the consequences for subjectivity and practice for my participants in using this sense making.

4.1. Drinking and the new global identity

Participants constructed their engagement in the M-NTE as participation in a new global identity. Drinking was constructed as a middle class activity, and the middle classes as a striated group defined and differentiated by their ability to live ‘*a comfortable life*’ (Jenna). Drinking was thus a middle class performance and something potentially not Indian but associated with Western and in particular American practices and individualism. As Jenna said about drinking culture ‘*it’s definitely making us more individualistic and it’s a very new thing for us. cos if I think of America. like they have had the individualist culture for a while. Like the whole ‘live for yourself. dream big for yourself’*. Although Jenna then makes a historical case that individualism was also part of Indian culture “*when the kings where there*”, she is the exception, and the other participants reproduce an understanding of drinking that is part of an individualist practice associated with being middle class and with a Western oriented global identity.

Drinking was constructed as something relatively new to Indian young people, but one that was rapidly becoming normalised amongst the middle classes, who were able to

segregate themselves from other aspects of society.

Extract 1 - Emily

Emily: [talking about newly emerging establishments] Yeah I think it's good, 'cos you know, people now, actually want to go and explore the whole party scene. They like going out, they like having a good time, and these places they let them, and so people don't have to sneak in booze and all that. They don't have to think about it too much. They don't have to go to a shady bar to have alcohol or something like that. It's fun, and it's safer. You go to a shady bar, you don't know what kind of people you will meet there, and these places, you know, some of them have cover charges. Some of them have expensive booze. So a lot of people think about going there, and you know, you know the kind of people that will be around when you go there.

Int: Would you say that you're paying money to buy the atmosphere in a way?

Emily: Yeah of course it is like that, I think it definitely is a luxury, but I think it's becoming a more day to day thing, 'cos everyone is earning so much, I think it was luxury 'till the past two years, after that it's changed. Every other place has happy hours and all. I think it's become pretty economic. So that way it's changing.

In the above extract Emily constructs drinking as becoming a normalised activity, in that participation the M-NTE has increased and as she states, there is a 'whole party scene' which people are keen to explore. As such drinking is a means to 'having a good time' in new establishments because, 'these places they let them, and so people don't have to sneak in booze'. The outcome is a set of new establishments that are fun and safe because participants can drink openly and also be with a clientele they can feel comfortable around. The upmarket and middle class establishments are constructed as safe and fun whilst non-middle class establishments are constructed as shady, together with the uncertainty about the clientele that visit them. What exactly this uncertainty is, is not explained, although my field work experience of being told that women can't enter certain bars after eleven pm because the male clientele cannot be trusted gives some sense of the issues that Emily might be referring to.

In Emily's extract safe, fun, public alcohol consumption is clearly important and

novel for young middle class urban Indians. These establishments are fun and safe because they are expensive (cover charge, a luxury), thus drinking in these places is limited to those with a high disposable income and the ability to therefore publicly consume. Alcohol consumption is thus located as part of the globalised consumer culture emerging in India. However, Emily also identifies ways in which finances may not be a defining feature of participation, because high earnings are now normative (in her experience) and happy hours also make drinking accessible for more people. In so doing, Emily thus constructs alcohol both as symbolic of luxury and normative (*it's becoming a more day to day thing*).

The luxurious and high status aspect of drinking is also produced by Jenna in the following extract, in which drinking is constructed as being done by high status peoples and as a route to give access to high status people, who she calls the 'creamy layer':

Extract 2 - Jenna

Jenna: Obviously, very stylish, cool quotient, more than anything it gives you that superiority privilege over your counterparts. Like 'yeah, I've been to that place' and like you can talk about it. You know, Facebook pictures, you can put up a string of pictures. You also have photographers at those places with Facebook pages, who put your photo on the club's page and all that. And I know people who share that and are like 'hey look, I am with this person and that person is singing cos there's a live gig going on' it's just an opportunity for people to meet other people from that creamy layer of society.

Jenna refers to the upper-middle class as the "creamy layer". This creamy layer establishes its position in the context of drinking through certain places, people and gigs that are worth talking about or sharing through Facebook pictures, and gives those within the layer an opportunity to interact with other people from a similar social standing. While Jenna considers the drinking culture as a means for upper-middle class people to meet others from a similar class, she also constructs drinking as a means of gaining access to that class. It allows people to present themselves as if they are part of the 'creamy layer' since the description of someone using an image to say *'hey look, I am with this person'* implies there is status to be gained from being seen with certain high

status people. Since participating in alcohol cultures is something that high status people do, drinking where they drink and being seen with them, allows young people to construct an identity (to themselves and others) in which they too are high status. In this extract the facilitator of this identity production is Facebook and the dynamics between on and offline interactions identified in the field notes (i.e. the photographer and the club's Facebook page), it is also an example of how users reproduce marketing material in their Facebook interactions.

As discussed in the literature review for this thesis the "new global identity" for Indians is one derived from the idea of consumption-driven lifestyles as a means of improving oneself as a part of the identity project (Giddens, 1991; Rose, 1999). This global identity also relates to Ong's work on flexible citizenship; the movement of neoliberal values around the world with increasing globalisation (Ong, 1999). In talking about alcohol consumption the participants evidenced these shifts as part of their experience and articulated an understanding that the middle classes were central to economic developments in India, constructing a shared consumerist, corporate goal. This, Jenna describes below in a highly articulate but unusually (in comparison to her friends) critical perspective.

Extract 3 - Jenna

Jenna: The middle class. I mean you're in the middle and you have your eyes set on the upper-middle and so they have this complete charge to achieve all those material things of corporate India. and yeah .and the differences are extreme. I mean the upper-middle and the lower-middle. live such different lives and its almost as if there is a wall for them. cos the lower class can't seem to move beyond that. cos many things are blocked for them and they have to fight for it the middle class are a major group. and sometimes it's almost hypocritical. cos everyone wants to live a comfortable life. I mean that's the aim. but the upper-middle sits in a bubble of their own.

In the case of India, the middle classes are expected to "charge" to the top and achieve a comfortable life by taking part in the consumption opportunities offered by globalisation (Oza, 2009). In this sense, the notion of a comfortable life and increased social mobility

is tied to consumption practices. As Jenna points out, to live a "materially comfortable" life means to live within an increasingly individualistic corporate lifestyle. This creates a striated middle class, where the upper-middle class are segregated in their own "bubble", excluding others from the middle class. I consider these "new striations" as they exist in an already striated Indian society. Whilst other segments of Indian society are divided by aspects of caste, religion and language, etc. (Fernandas, 2000) the middle class is stratified by its ability to gain access to global capital, which it demonstrates through its Western consumption practices (Oza, 2009). Upward mobility through the middle classes, however limited, with the lower striations having to "fight" as they become "blocked" from moving upwards, despite their shared aspirations of living a materially comfortable life. Jenna constructs this as a hypocrisy of the middle class(es); they appear to be in a "bubble" of their own and do not help others to achieve the same social and material standing. In the context of earlier extracts, alcohol may thus play a social mobility route across these striations.

In summary, in this discourse drinking is associated with the 'new' India, a middle class, Western oriented group of high status people who are defined by their consumer power and experiential consumption such as, drinking and going to fashionable events. Drinking is not only a measure of status but is also new, fun and exciting, and now through the rapid development of new drinking establishments for the middle classes it is an activity which the "bubble" can enjoy in a safe way. In summary, drinking is embedded in the vision of a "new India" (Chowdhary, 2009) and associated with fun and new ways of being. Additionally, it also represents, and provides access to, higher striations of the middle class(es). In spite of the barriers it is possible to buy this access, and in turn, the lifestyle that comes with Westernised drinking within the experience and pleasure economy (Fry, 2010). Despite this discourse of 'global identity' constructing middle class drinking establishments as fun and safe, the second discourse identified constructing drinking as a potentially unsafe space for women, so that safety became an aspect of drinking that needed to be managed.

4.2. Three impossible spaces: Drinking in the context of Gender, Nationalism and Money

In the earlier sections of the interview analysis I showed how my participants linked participation in the M-NTE to the larger benefits of globalisation to the middle class(es). And I argue that the drinking cultures my participants participated in have their origins in the culture of intoxication literature in the UK, evidenced for example, from my field notes which showed how Indians were being ‘taught’ to drink through careful marketing that modeled itself on British culture of intoxication practices (e.g. “here to get you smashed”). As discussed in the literature review, the culture of intoxication is a seemingly female friendly culture in which women are actively marketed to through postfeminist rhetoric of equal (and feminine) participation. However, as Griffin and others have argued, there is no good place from which British women can drink, since to drink like a man is unfeminine, but to drink like a girl is not to fully participate – thus women have two undesirable positions from which to drink.

The idea of impossible spaces was also useful in thinking about my participants experiences of participating in their culture of intoxication. While the earlier section considers drinking as a gateway to globalisation, I argue that drinking for young female participants is also constructed as a space in which a range of risks have to be negotiated, that produce drinking as a set of impossible spaces for my participants. These impossible spaces require my participants to do contradictory things: to participate in the culture of intoxication as equals when the lived experience is gendered; to participate in an individualistic consumerist culture that is constructed as un-Indian and also to be ‘good’ Indian women - to participate in an expensive culture while not having their own income. I discuss these three spaces below.

Participation within the B-NTE is equal in terms of gender, given the marketing efforts to specifically make establishments and drinks more female friendly and inviting to women, however, analysts argue that the lived experience of women is very different. The lived experience is largely gendered and as such Griffin (2006) points out that women are constantly required to address anxiety surrounding issues of femininity with

strategies of reputation management. In the case of my participants, a similar kind of reputation management was required to justify their participation within the M-NTE.

Extract 4 - Jenna

Jenna: I think there's still a bit of inequality when it comes to drinking. Say a bunch of friends go out to drink. I always find the men, telling the women to not drink too much, cos 'hey you'll go out of control' 'and you'll end up flashing the whole world' or on the other hand you'll have men who'll just give the women too much to just get lucky with them, that's the case. But there are always people who sit together and they'll go, but they'll also be at times, this one guy who will not drink, cos he has to take her home you know, so he'll deny himself the good time because he feels she wouldn't be able to handle. And I have found this protective nature more of the women than for their male friends, cos then it's like 'yeah he'll be fine, he can manage. So, which can be connected to the outside, the way the world will look at her and I guess they are trying to be safe, but it all slip into the personal, cos the outside slips into how you deal with a small social group. And it's there.

The above participant talks about the "inequality" surrounding women's drinking. Referring above to the men from her own friendship group, she categorises them as either protective or as just "trying to get lucky" with the women in the group. Thus, young women need to manage the risk and their reputation, both of which are gendered. Although the above quote is an explanation in the form of a hypothetical situation, it nonetheless allows us to understand my participants' thought processes about their complex gendered relationship with men. In the Indian context, managing risks involved managing and protecting themselves from sexual advances, while maintaining one's reputation involves not being seen publicly drunk. Unlike young women in the UK, it is not in relation to being perceived as sexually promiscuous and being labelled "easy" or a "slag" (Lyons & Williot, 2008).

Extract 5 -Jenna

Jenna: Men will just stare. like if you're actually walking on the road, you have to face it.

A number of you can get into the whole realm of men, why they are like that, where it's just that they are brought up that way. They are brought up in a way that, you can do whatever you want, to you."I mean it's a highly patriarchal system, and that comes to play as well and a lot of regressive thought, in that they haven't had contact with many women, maybe apart from their wife when they get married. So there's that whole lag of wanting something, holding back, and once you're drunk you lose control, so whether you act upon that, or, you know. So it's all those things playing together.

INT: I mean, Is that irrespective of socio-economic status.. =

Jenna: Hmm.. I think it's what, I mean. There are men who can get unwantedly annoying even from upper class, but I guess women are more likely to let that slide. You know? If like, but it's a lot easier to pin it down on a person who is from an economically lower background cos you don't see anything else except for them just cat calling at you. So you tend to point a finger at them more than like your friends boyfriend for example. Suppose if he is like being strange with you, but you might not see much, or you might choose not to. I mean, it depends on the kind of person you are as well. =

The impossible space in terms of the role of men, is not only discussed in terms of gender inequality, but also extends to talk about class. In the above extract, Jenna provides an account of the men from "the outside world" mentioned earlier. The previous extract pointed out the over-protective nature of men from their friendship group, which the participant sees as potentially to "protect" from this outside world. Here, we can gain some insight into the construction of these other men. The participant talks about men staring at you as something you "have to face". She attributes this to the "repressive thought" that comes with the patriarchal system, stating that these men believe they can "do whatever they want" having been brought up within this system. Additionally, they may not have encountered many women apart from their wives. Masculinity of the "patriarchal man" is constructed as old fashioned, regressive and tied to the notion of the arising sexual repression, which Jenna explains is the reason being drunk makes those men act out their sexually repressed thoughts and they "lose control". She attributes this sexual repression of men brought up in a patriarchal system to the tradition of arranged marriage in India. While other participants feel they can avoid encountering this by

choosing upmarket establishments and by engaging exclusively in a middle class to upper class demographic, this particular participant disagrees and does not consider it a class specific occurrence. Instead, she feels that women are less likely to "point a finger" at men from the middle class or from their peer group and are more likely to "pin it down" on someone from an "economically lower background". Thus, the construction of the patriarchal male is associated with the lower classes.

The access and safety provided by certain types of "global consumption" described in the earlier chapters, as a means to establish a distinct group are viewed here in this section in a different light. Although the new drinking culture is described as something fresh and exciting for those who can afford it, women's entry in that space is conditional and contradictory. The above section highlights the complicated role of men in their participation in the drinking culture. The participants' accounts of this consist of talk about men from their own friendship group and from the "outside world", both of which create a difficult situation for women to freely enjoy their night out. The impossible space, in this instance, is the protective and predatory nature of men from their group and the predatory nature of men in the outside world. Although the conversation is mainly about the gender inequality and double standard when it comes to women's drinking, it highlights the complicated intersection between gender and the ambiguous class categorisations. Participants negotiated these gendered relations in various ways, including drawing on male protection, as in Bethany's extract below

Extract 6 - Bethany

Bethany: I think the men are more aware of the looks that other men give those women, so they become a little more weary of those, and I guess they feel uncomfortable. And they feel that they will be able to save it, cos unfortunately, in the society here when a man talks to a man it makes more of difference, cos they wouldn't listen to the woman. But I dunno if the person protecting knows all this or if they are just doing it at impulse. So that's why sometimes when I go to a place I go with a guy, just so I'll be more comfortable and I don't have to think.

The above extract highlights the way in which Bethany manages the gender inequality by

using it to enable her to participate in the drinking culture. She says, "unfortunately, in the society here when a man talks to a man it makes more of a difference, cos they wouldn't listen to a women", and to tackle the impossible space of being an 'individual in a gendered world' she purposefully goes to a place accompanied by a male friend just so, "I'll be comfortable and I don't need to think".

Issues of safety and reputation management also have to be managed by my participants' British counterparts. However, in their case, reputation is more in relation to sexual promiscuity and avoiding being considered "easy" or a "slag" by other women (Griffin, 2006). Furthermore, this reputation management takes the form of strategic "othering" in order to establish their position of middle class femininity (Lyons & Williot, 2008). Women are aware of this "other", and that the stereotype attached to sexual promiscuity is that of the "working class, ladette"; it is an image middle class women aim to avoid. In the case of Indian women, other men from within the group take it upon themselves to protect and maintain safety, from both harassment from the outside world and sexual advances from within the friendship group.

Young women's participation in drinking cultures is limited; in terms of both the establishments they can visit, and the company they keep and engage with whilst at the establishment. Furthermore, these aspects need to be managed effectively and can be partially controlled. However, this involves "buying safety" and is only possible in some cases (driver on a girls-only night). Buying safety might involve going to a more expensive/ upmarket establishment in Zone 1 and whilst the place might feel safer Jenna points out that, *there are men who can get unwantedly annoying even from upper class.* Thus, women in India, similarly to their British counterparts, manage safety and reputation when it comes to their interaction with men. Yet for Indian women, in many instances it involves a reliance on men to achieve this objective.

In the earlier sections of the interview analysis I showed how my participants linked participation in the M-NTE to the larger benefits of globalisation to the middle class(es). And I argue that the drinking cultures my participants participated in have their origins in the culture of intoxication literature in the UK, evidenced for example, from my field notes which showed how Indians were being 'taught' to drink through careful marketing

that modelled itself on British culture of intoxication practices (e.g. “here to get you smashed”). In contrast, I identified a different impossible space for my participants that was derived from the National identity with a strong component of preserving culture.

The culture of intoxication is based on neoliberal values of Western consumption and individualism (Giddens, 1991; Measham & Brain, 2005). Srivastava argues a moral and cultural angle to consumption patterns which are implicitly gendered and thus limit women’s choices (Srivastava, 2012). The M-NTE being a space for Western/ global consumption whilst simultaneously being a space in which a Western practise of drinking occurs, is problematic and is viewed as un-Indian. To participate in the M-NTE is to take up the role as an "ideal" neoliberal global citizens, but in the context in which global consumerist identities are positioned in contrast to culturally valued national identities, in which women represent Indian values of community, and the seeking of collective good over personal gratification. The impossible space for my participants then is tied into an ambiguous notion of "Indian culture" - my participants are expected to represent Indian culture whilst participating in global consumption, practices that are understood as incompatible.

Extract 7 - Bethany

Bethany: [when asked about any bad experiences on a night out] Frankly, I haven't gotten into anything, like I am a little safe about, like over drinking in public places. But, like we were drinking in a friend's house, and a friend, a girl and a guy were drinking on the street and they weren't being loud and stuff. So the policeman turned up and he hit the girl and the guy with sticks and was like 'what is all this, this is against Indian culture, girl and guy roaming around drinking so late at night.

Bethany talks about not having any bad experiences on a night out, as she tends to be "safe about over-drinking in public places". She recalls two friends of hers who were drinking on the street and hit by the police with sticks, who claimed that "a guy and a girl roaming around drinking late at night" is against Indian culture. Bethany's account highlights a negative experience, which occurs outside of the middle class "bubble". The

middle class bubble consists of upper-middle class lifestyles and consumption practices and includes up-market drinking establishments (Zone 1 and 2). Bad experiences on a night out are framed in light of overtly public drinking and the resulting fear of sexual harassment and judgement (see Extract 10 below, "you'll end up flashing the whole world").

Bethany's extract highlights the conservative and contradictory nature of Indian society outside of the "global middle class", where an unmarried man and woman being out late at night drinking is not only frowned upon but also is punishable. It is worth noting here that during my fieldwork I was informed of policemen beating couples with sticks for sitting on the beach late at night on Valentine's Day. Such examples suggest that police and other government officials are very strict about drinking and more generally about things that are considered Western.

Government officials and its subsidiaries (Mumbai police department) are currently implementing a rhetoric, which stresses the preservation of "Indian culture". This has resulted in several bans in Mumbai, including bans on certain meats (e.g. beef), pornography, and attempt at banning Valentine's Day. Government officials need to manage this rhetoric to preserve "Indian culture" without hindering India's larger economic goals, which revolve around foreign investment and the middle class consumption habits (Oza, 2009; Van Wessel, 2004). This places the young women participants in a precarious situation in which they need to balance their "Western" consumption habits and yet maintain an undefined "Indian culture", which has a strong focus on women as representations of Indian morals and traditions (Shrivastava, 2015). This notion of women as a representation of the larger nation of India is reminiscent of Anita Harris's work in her book, "Future Girl", which focuses on young women's access to resources and the invisible class limitations within the larger neoliberal regime in the UK. In this sense, there are similarities between my participants and their Western counterparts (British in this case). I argue here for us to consider these similarities as the "common difference" between my participants and their Western counterparts. Within a neoliberal regime, British women are expected to conduct their femininity practices as "empowered individuals" through appropriate consumption; a similar case can be made for Indian women. However, Indian women are largely talked about in relation to their

role of preserving "Indian culture" and are expected to be driven by a strong moral and cultural code (Shrivastava, 2015). As a result, a young Indian woman's class is tied to her participation in globalisation and consumption, while her femininity is tied to her representative role as a preserver of moral "Indian culture" (Oza, 2009; Chowdhary, 2012; & Harris, 2003).

The Mumbai night time economy is similar to the UK's due to its commercialised drinking environment. However, the participants' negotiations of femininity and class in the M-NTE are bound within pre-determined upmarket middle class drinking establishments (mainly in Zone 2). Any young woman stepping outside of those boundaries is placed in a vulnerable position, and is prone to issues (the police, social judgement) arising from the contradictory nature of women's Western consumption practices. These consumption practices are assessed and judged by the wider society, through a strong cultural lens of traditional Indian culture that informs my understanding of the larger moral panic surrounding young Indian women changing social roles within a rapidly globalising India (Oza, 2009; Shrivastava 2015, Lyons & Williot, 2008). Similarly, Laëtitia (below) discusses 'a generation gap' between young people involved in 'new Indian' globalised drinking practices and the expected appropriate behaviour from authority figures such as parents.

Extract 8 - Laëtitia

Laëtitia: I think there's a big generation gap. I mean some parents might be cool with drinking, but a majority of them, frown upon it, so you can't openly discuss it with your parents. Drinking is still a big taboo, and that's more for women. I remember my dad had a problem with me drinking if I was the only girl. And he said don't go if you're the only girl, it's not good to be drinking with three or four guys. And my dad being a very, very broad-minded person.

There is a generational component to the larger contradictory expectations placed on young women in Mumbai and their participation in the M-NTE. Building on the previous extract, which highlights the external resistance to participation (police) there is also internal resistance from sources such as family and friends (Extract 10). Laëtitia talks

about the difficulty of "openly discussing drinking with your parents" as "it's still a big taboo" and a majority of middle class parents "frown upon it". She draws on her own experience of her father, who she says is a "very, very broad minded person" but had a problem if she was the only girl in a group of men, highlighting the anxieties around young women gender dynamics. In terms of her participation, she needs to manage both her safety and her reputation. Whilst Laëtitia constructs her parents as different, given that they are tolerant of her drinking behaviour (the majority of the time), her account highlights the "taboo" of having a conversation about drinking, which other participants have to negotiate, (see for example Niki below) by managing the tension and hiding a drinking lifestyle from their parents. Women's participation in the M-NTE is intricately tied to managing their vulnerabilities, which are issues of safety (Extract 5) and reputation management (above Extract and Extract 10).

Extract 9 - Niki

Niki: [Niki's response to her parents' views of her drinking] No, I mean they have issues. But like they think someone is dropping me back home or like, I tell them I am staying at a friend's place and then go back in the morning =

[How much Niki's parents think she drinks] No, like, I think my dad thinks I have a beer like, once in like a month.

Int: So how would you describe your drinking then?

Niki - Binge. =

While Laëtitia's account highlights the "taboo" surrounding having a conversation on the topic of drinking. Niki's parents have "issues with her drinking"; her dad thinks she drinks a "beer like, once a month". While Laëtitia preferred to discuss her drinking with her parents Niki prefers to tell her parents "someone is dropping her back home" or that she is "staying at a friend's place". Drinking without their parents' knowledge or consent is a risk that needs to be managed for the participants, alongside the risk of hiding the truth and lying about participation in drinking practices.

Extract 10 - Niki,

Niki: [Niki's response when asked about her concerns of having family members as Facebook friends] Well, like my family does have Facebook. But it's a conscious decision not to have them on my Facebook. Like my dad is on Facebook. But he is not on my Friends list. They wouldn't approve, and also I think there's a large generation gap, but I think, like for example (friend's mom) she is okay with us drinking at home and smoking at home and stuff. It really depends.

Niki's account talks about her conscious decision not to add family members to her Facebook account. Although she finishes her quote with, "it really depends" on the individual's family, overall she attributes this lack of 'approval' to a 'generation gap', which is a common thread running across several participant's accounts. Drinking is thus a public activity, particularly due to social media, which needs to be concealed and managed within participants' private lives. It is simultaneously public and not public as certain cultural barriers are placed on participants' overt drinking. These include running into trouble with the police (mentioned in Extract 5) and not having complete approval from family, which participants view as being due, not necessarily, to the generation gap, but to the larger cultural issues with women's participation in drinking cultures.

The adaptability of the drinking establishments provides certain affordances, which my participants implement into their strategies to manage the tension and contradictory requirements placed on them. Many drinking establishments are considered to be a "restaurant and bar", with the ambiance and menus changing after dinnertime (see field notes). As a result, these establishments are familiar to my participants' parents, who consider them to represent appropriate places for middle class consumption. These places provide a context from which parents can make sense of their daughters' leisure activities and, as such, are viewed as respectable places for young women to socialise, as Laëtitia confirms, "*we can go out to a nicer place, (and) not have any resistance from your family.*" Young women thus manage their participation in the M-NTE through strategically negotiating with authoritative figures, such as parents and other family. This strategic management of safety, reputation and societal pressures is a part of young people's larger negotiations of the contradictory cultural expectations placed on young women with

regard to their consumption practices. This strategic management is an issue their counterparts in the UK manage, by distancing from "others" (class negotiations) and controlling their excessive drinking practices to maintain their sense of "femininity" (Lyons & Williot, 2008; Griffin, 2006; 2015). This is again, a "common difference" in that young women in India need to manage the cultural variations, which are unique to the Indian context. Thus, while both British and Indian women manage their gender and class issues, young Indian women are required to manage their "project of the self" through consumption in a way that also incorporates the Indian sense of accountability towards family to a larger extent than the general British youth population.

The above section highlights the added complications of being an ideal "feminine neoliberal subject" for my participants and there are issues of safety and reputation, which need to be managed. Moreover, these issues are heightened when consumption took place beyond the conceived "middle class bubble" and its corresponding drinking establishments (described as "shady bars"). Given the heavily commercialised nature of the M-NTE which is specifically tailored with marketing content for the Indian demographic, creates a feeling of the drinking practise being one that is "Indian". However, this acceptance of the new drinking culture being seen as Indian is only surface level and my participants accounts suggest the impossible space which lies between the reality of drinking within the M-NTE and the ways in which it is marketed.

Access to safe drinking establishments relates to participants' ability to be a part of the idealised, elitist drinking culture. Earlier discussions highlight the need, or the dual purpose, behind wanting to be a part of the upper-middle class in order to engage in the drinking culture, and vice versa. The following extracts talk about access as something they both have and do not have. They have access to establishments within their living Zones (e.g. Zone 1), however, they aspire to visit more upmarket establishments in order to increase safety. They find ways to gain access by paying for it and thus the access to elite drinking is commodified. Alternatively, happy hours and discounts make this possible at a reduced cost. However, they do not have complete access to these places, as most of them are students or young professionals and have not cemented their position as belonging to the upper-middle class. Thus, buying safety and buying into the elitist

drinking in upmarket places, requires access. Below is an example of the way in which the participants are able to "buy safety" and acceptance. Niki talks about a "girls' night out", where they visit all of their favourite places.

Extract 11 - Niki

Niki: It's just that we just went to all our favourite places, and plus because it's Bombay, it's a bit difficult to travel. So we just like chose to do it in, like, all of south Bombay, cos we had like a designated driver =

Int: oh, was that one of you ?

Niki: no, no, we hired a driver ((laughs)) so, yeah, we could stay out 'till like 4 in the morning.

These places are in south Bombay (Zone 1), and it is a long commute for my participants in Zone 2 and 3. However, south Bombay, being a major tourist destination, drinking to excess or overt alcohol consumption is accepted. As a result of this, the participants only visit this area on special occasions ("big nights out"). A "big night" for my participants, similar to their counterparts in the UK, involves excessive drinking which is different to practices in Zones 2 and 3. In the extract below, my participants managed both safety and reputation, whilst managing to have a big night involving excessive drinking, by making the commute more convenient by hiring a driver. This enabled them to stay out until 4 am (bars close at one am but they could buy alcohol from a "tapri" or street vendor). On the subject of returning home to their parents, these big nights tend to happen when someone from the friendship group has a free apartment. My participants, depending on finances and timing (parents travelling), strategically plan and manage their excessive drinking sessions by visiting upmarket places during 'happy hours', and by paying for drivers. Paying more money allowed Niki and her friends to have a "big night out", however, given that most of my participants are students and do not have a disposable income, these kind of nights are difficult financially and require planning.

Extract 12 - Niki

Niki: I think when you're a student it becomes a mundane thing. But when you're living with your folks, it becomes a bit stressful. Like obviously my parents pay for it, but you know. Also like, if I had the house to myself it would be different. But, I don't think my parents know how much I drink.

Niki talks about the stress of living with parents and being able to drink freely, and then reflects on the alternative, which would be having her own place. However, she acknowledges that her parents pay for her drinking without being fully aware of how much or how often she participates in drinking activities. Elsewhere, similarly to Niki's account, Emily has spoken about the paradox of drinking becoming a very mundane activity for the upper-middle class, but at the same time limitations and conditions continue to be placed on women's drinking. Furthermore, it is difficult to bypass these limitations through paying for safety, as most participants are reliant on their parents to pay for an activity, which they do not readily approve of and do not really understand.

Extract 13 - Bethany

Bethany: I dunno, maybe the freedom. I mean, I think Bombay and Bangalore are the only cities, which are like safe now. So like the freedom to come back home, compared to the other cities. So I think, the liberty that we get to go out and come back at any time and the resources. The places and choices we have, we have way loads of places where you can go out and be safe. I don't know if there are places which are economic and safe at the same time.

Bethany's account highlights the issue of conditional access, more importantly the difficulty of finding places, which are both "economic and safe at the same time". However, the tone of the account suggests that, in spite of those limitations, she considers drinking in Mumbai a 'freedom' and a 'liberty'. The freedom of having resources (options in terms of drinking establishments) and to 'come back at any time' is better than in other cities, but still draws on discourses of safety and security.

Bethany's account highlights the contradiction faced by most of my participants in

relation to their drinking. The juxtaposition of 'freedom' with aspects of safety and other "limitations" is critical in understanding participants' sense making. They have gained conditional access to the drinking culture, which they consider an opportunity. Yet the traditional socio-historical position of drinking in a patriarchal society also presents challenges and obstacles to this access. It is an impossible space, as it is possible to buy this access, yet given my participants status as students, they are reliant on their parents.

Opportunity and access are very important themes in my participants' accounts. It is not simply a question of access into upmarket establishments but also the larger sense of autonomy. However, access in the case of my participants is tied to their financial positions and within the M-NTE there are ways in which my participants manage to "buy access". This bought access represents not only a literal security, in terms of feeling safer in an upmarket establishment, but also security in terms of the class position of the middle class within the narrative of "ideal consumer citizens". Furthermore, apart from asking their parents for money, they are also accountable to their parents in terms of their larger leisure activities and, as such, need to manage the nature of their participation in the drinking culture through lying or hiding it from their parents.

The above section describes a more practical problem my participants face, that of financial dependence on their parents. Given that most of my participants are already a part of the middle class, the participation within the M-NTE is completely warranted as a space for middle class consumption. However, I consider this to be another impossible space, as my participants themselves do not have disposable incomes and as such cannot freely make choices about the drinking establishments. Furthermore, the issues of gender and the cultural backdrop in which participation takes place, makes asking money from family difficult.

The above section makes the case for participation in the M-NTE as an impossible space consisting of three different impossible spaces for my participants which revolve around issues of gender, nation and culture and finally, money. Impossible spaces arise from my participants "inner circles" such as friends and family as well as the "outside world". These include accounting and explaining their participation in drinking cultures to authoritative figures such as parents and family. This was strategically managed by my participants through disclosing varying levels of detail to their parents, with one

participant preferring to hide her drinking activity from her parents altogether, which has further implications in terms of her safety and risks. Another risk that needed to be managed stemmed from the men in their friendship group. The participants described a difficult situation in which women are required to both rely on men friends (for protection) and to protect themselves from men in terms of unwanted sexual advances from within their friendship group.

The "outside world" presented even greater risks for my participants, which involved in some cases, trouble with the police and physical assault (not involving a participant in the study). The above negotiations are largely gendered, but are also connected to issues of class. My participants managed their relationship towards men in strategic ways by being protected "by men" and "against men". The issue of gender and class were linked together in complicated ways, yet differed to the safety and reputation management practices of women in the UK. Furthermore, as women, my participants are targets of the larger anxieties around globalisation that I described in the literature review in that their consumption- driven lifestyles can be viewed as symbolic of a "loss of Indian culture" due to their participation in M-NTE, which on the surface is catering towards a gender neutral Indian middle class demographic.

Conclusion

This thesis sought to address three research questions about the material and discursive contexts in which middle class drinking occurs in Mumbai mainly focusing on the ways in which a group of young, middle class urban Indian women made sense of their drinking and the associated implications for subjectivity and practice, and the conditions of possibility for this sense making.

My field notes explored the material and discursive contexts of middle class urban drinking in Mumbai in which I identified the way bars drinking establishments were located in specific geographical locations in the city and within specific areas in these locations. This analysis highlighted the way bars managed the potentially illicit or problematic nature of alcohol consumption in India through location (e.g. covert settings), security, and marketing.

My analysis suggests that alcohol is being marketed in ways that directly engage with the contradiction and tensions of alcohol consumption in India by marketing alcohol as both normal and excitingly new, as both Indian and Western (thus not Indian), and as aspirational, upmarket, fun and elitist. The marketing and consumption of alcohol was done through the integration of on and offline spaces so that alcohol could be used as a vehicle for identity: to be part of and seen to be part of something culturally valuable.

These findings build on the literature on social media alcohol marketing, to show developments in the integrated nature of marketing between on and offline social and personal worlds (for example, being able to watch drinks prices when not at the bar connected the participants to the bar even when at another location). It also showed cultural differences in the use of Facebook, in the context of alcohol consumption being somewhat illicit in a culture that does not have a history of drinking cultures, social media is used to share experiences and extend the night out so sharing this function with Western drinkers (Niland *et al.*, 2013), but the actual practice is different since in India it must be done in covert ways (e.g. using the events page). In the case of India, value was placed on being at certain establishment and the brands of alcohol which are in line with the emphasis the middle class place on their consumer practices as means to engage in

benefits of globalisation and become or be seen as socially mobile group.

My interview analysis furthered my understanding of the discourses constructing alcohol consumption in M-NTE by exploring the sense making of the participants. Two broad forms of sense making were identified; the first constructed drinking as part of a consumer oriented practice of the wealthy and successful middle classes who oriented to Western values. They also echoed the marketing discourse of constructing alcohol as fun and providing social mobility in a consumer-oriented culture, since drinking gave access to the 'creamy layer'. However, the interview analysis also highlighted the conditional ways in which these young women could participate in the M-NTE. These conditions oriented around what I called three impossible spaces: to act as independent women within a patriarchal system that required them to accept a certain dependency on men (e.g. as protectors); to act as individualist neoliberal consumerist subjects and also as Indian women who are collectivist and do not gratify their own needs; and to participate in an expensive youth culture that provides access to the 'creamy' layer as well as basic security while not having their own income. These impossible spaces were also classed, so that for example, the participants might feel they needed to 'choose' to be less critical of unwanted middle class attention. This has certain implications for their subjectivity and practise in that participants overcame the barriers of participation in the M-NTE not only to establish their position as middle class consumers, but also given the marketing discourse which constructs the M-NTE as space for middle class consumption, participation was seen as a necessity. In practice, participants engaged in elaborate planning of nights out both in terms of logistics and finances which allowed them to buy into a practice that was normative and fun on the surface.

These impossible spaces both draw on, and develop, the work of Griffin's analysis of British women's drinking in the context of postfeminism. The current study shows the way nationality and consumerism also locate women in particular ways that create impossible-to-resolve identity challenges. I argue here that young women in Mumbai, similar to their UK counterparts, have "conditional access" to their respective NTEs (Griffin, 2006; and Lyons & Williot, 2008). Their participation is contradictory, problematic and entrenched in traditional socio- historical notions of gender and class. Furthermore, in terms of their similarities and differences, I propose the idea of a

"common difference", which is based on the larger characteristics of the flexible, autonomous and responsible project of the self, based around consumption-driven practices (i.e. drinking) within a neoliberal regime (Giddens, 1991; Ong, 2008; Riley, Morey & Griffin, 2010). It is important to note that I have borrowed the term "common difference" from Kjeldgaard and Askegaard (2008), who are from a consumer theory background, and propose the idea of the "glocal" (global merged with local depending on national variations) consumption patterns of youth cultures around the world. Although this can be considered one avenue through which to understand women's participation in the M-NTE, it does not consider the contradictory requirements placed on the "self" within a neoliberal ideology, this an important consideration for the current project, given its post-structurally informed theoretical orientation and aim to contribute to the field of critical social psychology.

My participants negotiation of their gender and class roles with the M-NTE was based around the "shared aspirations" of the middle class(es), which are tied to the potential benefits of "corporate India" and globalisation (Chowdhary, 2009). Social mobility is the key aim here, with the lower-middle and the middle class "charging to the top" to achieve the materially comfortable life of those in the upper-middle class. Drinking practices fit into this as a means of gaining access within these larger class movements, as the globalised drinking culture in Mumbai is considered mainly an "upper-middle class luxury". There is a desire to be a part of the upper-middle class or rather to move up the middle class ladder through drinking at certain establishments that are considered upper-middle class (Zone 1 and 2). However, access to drinking establishments, and indeed to the larger upper-middle class status, are bound up in an economic discourse, which protects the status quo and the "upper-middle class sit in a bubble of their own". My participants had to manage safety and risks from within their personal circles of family and friends and also from the wider society. Their participation within the M-NTE was linked to anxiety and moral panic surrounding the current wave of nationalism, which enforces women's position in society under the rhetoric of preserving "Indian culture" (Chowdhary, 2009). However, this is tied to the larger anxiety surrounding the contradictory requirements of neoliberal citizenship, which blurs the traditionally grounded notion of "global" and "local" (Chowdhary, 2009; Ong, 2008). The

risks and safety issues are classed in terms of their movement within the middle class(es) and gendered under the ideals of "Indian femininity". These issues namely - The neoliberal contradiction within globalisation, which in the case of the M-NTE complicates the interactions between the national/ cultural, gendered and class discourses which my participants need to negotiate contextualise my research findings, enabling me to examine the conditions of possibility for the material and discursive contexts and sense making identified in the field notes and interview analysis.

In conclusion, women in Mumbai, like their counterparts in the UK, need to manage and negotiate their participation within the M-NTE through contradictory notions of femininity and class, which in the case of Indian women are tied to national identities as well as globalisation and the larger neoliberal subjectivity. Their class identity (within the middle class) under a neoliberal regime is ascribed to keep in line with their purchasing power and consumption practices. (Chowdhary, 2009). The M-NTE and drinking practices in general, which they consider a means of access or a "gateway" to this upper-middle class, are a globalised and highly commercial activity (Measham and Brain, 2005), yet must be engaged with in ways that align with local concerns and values, which for the participants in this study problematised women consumers, particularly women consumers of alcohol. Thus, I concur with Sanjay Shrivastava's assertion which in line with my social constructionism position, posits that, "Indian women, like men are presented with equal chances of becoming consumers (and thus are "invited" to participate in globalised drinking), however, the woman is seen as a sacrificing figure who is expected to facilitate male consumption rather than consume herself" (Shrivastava, 2015 p. 336).

Strengths and limitations

The main strength of the current study lie in its interdisciplinary approach to drinking. This approach enables the study to tackle to complex issues surrounding young womens' drinking from multiple angles by contextualising "drinking" within the M-NTE economy. The strong ethnographic component, typical within fields of anthropology and sociology, is another strength, which reinforces its interdisciplinary approach. The ethnographic fieldwork conducted during this study allowed me to explore a completely new research environment, namely the M-NTE, which provides a certain depth to my psychological inquiry into their participation and sense-making. Furthermore, the ethnographic nature of the fieldwork together with the marketing literature provided key reference points and were an important observation lens from which to base my analysis of the M-NTE. Finally, the analytical approach of Foucauldian discourse analysis allowed me to explore the complex contradictions placed on the citizen within a neoliberal regime, and the possibilities for subjectivity and practice afforded by the discourses on which the participants drew and which structured their material on and offline worlds. Participation in contemporary consumer culture is complex and contradictory (Riley, Thompson & Griffin, 2010) thus an analytical lens that takes in this complexity is required for a thorough and useful exploration of the issue. The key strength of my thesis was thus in being able to locate participants sense making (e.g. in their interviews), with their immediate material and discursive context (e.g. the on and off line performance and marketing of drinking), and in turn to locate their immediate context within wider socio-political, historical and economic frames. In so doing, I have been able to make a contribution to the literature on alcohol consumption in neoliberal regimes, widening the context to include emerging markets and identifying new shifts in marketing that fully blur online and offline social and personal worlds; I have also moved forward literatures on women's participation in the culture of intoxication, thus contributing to postfeminist work.

Whilst acknowledging the strengths of the current study it did have certain limitations, which are important to recognise. The data collection phase or fieldwork for

the current study was four weeks long. Although this was adequate amount of time to gain some insight into the M-NTE, however, it did not allow me to observe my participants drinking practices in great detail. The exploratory nature of the study warranted a open non-protocol approach to the ethnography, however, a longer time frame was data collection would have enabled me to develop a protocol based on my initial work in the field which would have added rigour to my ethnographic observations. Additional time in the field would also have allowed me to better understand and contextualise the drinking, prior to meeting and interviewing my participants. In the case of the current study, the fieldwork did provide a certain shared sense making of the M-NTE, as my observations, allowed the participants to reflect on their own views of the M-NTE. Finally, the data gathering and information available on the role of social media within participant sense making was limited.

Future directions

The present study suggests that future research direction would be fruitful in exploring the notion of "common difference" to understand how neoliberalism is being experienced as it rolls out to include nations now considered 'emerging markets', as well as Far East countries that have already experienced neoliberal deregulation. Research on women's management of gender and class negotiations within drinking cultures in existing and emerging neoliberal regimes of governance is limited and scattered, with most work focused on Western countries like the UK and Australia. The notion of common difference might be one way in which a thread that is sensitive to difference can be traced between women's experiences that are united through globalised 'glocal' alcohol marketing, developing existing literature that has not taken this intersectional approach to include nationality, as well as creating new literatures on non-Western experiences of participating in the culture of intoxication.

By contextualise common difference with the larger movements of neoliberalism future research could better understand and conceptualise the changes and contradictions with the neoliberal subject as it moves across to India with globalisation.

Future research would benefit from alternative ways of thinking about neoliberal subjectivity, which could be enabled by incorporating other post-structuralist thinkers for

a more diverse range of analytic strengths they bring with them. For example, the analytics of assemblage and lines of flight of Deleuze and Guattari might facilitate my analysis of the conditions of possibility and how young women negotiate the material and discursive contexts created by these conditions of possibility.

Marketing strategies play a key role in our understanding of alcohol consumption practices in India. Effective marketing, alongside the developments in new media technologies facilitate a "culture of intoxication" style drinking within India. Future research would benefit from incorporating a more rigorous online ethnography component, which can capture the fluidity of modern alcohol marketing within new media technologies. Furthermore, by adding this component, we can build on the "offline drinking/online branding" within of the M-NTE presented in the current study. This will allow a better understanding of the way in which young people in India manage their clandestine drinking alongside their overt display of branding material.

This study has been an ambitious project to explore a complex practice from the perspective of the participants, and to contextualise their perspectives within the wider conditions of possibility in which they operate, conditions that include material and discursive immediate drinking contexts, both on and offline, and the wider socio-historical, economic and political context. To address this complexity I employed an in-depth ethnography that required the participants to trust me and for me to trust in the research process that I had studied so hard, so that I step into their world and absorb it in participatory and also critically reflective ways. In addressing this challenge to the best of my ability I identified the importance placed on participating in the M-NTE, which was strategically marketed and constructed as a fun and exciting way of being a part of an upper-middle class group who are benefactors of globalisation, furthermore, I outlined the issues related to gender, culture and access which my participants had to consider in their sense making and argued the case for their participation presenting them with the above impossible spaces. Finally, I interpreted these findings in wider context and literatures on drinking, postfeminism and marketing and highlighted several avenues for future research.

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Appendices

- 1) Ethical approval document
- 2) Participant Information sheet
- 3) Participant consent form
- 4) Participant debrief form
- 5) Interview Guide
- 6) Fieldnotes (In the field) - unanalysed.

Department of Psychology Research Committee
ETHICS APPLICATION RESPONSE

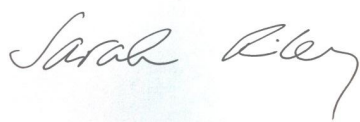
Name of applicant	Sagar Murdeshwar
Topic of study	Social media and drinking cultures in Mumbai
Type of Researcher (please tick)	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate student

Outcome of your resubmission

☒ The submission is passed with no required amendments and research can commence.

Please note that you will need to provide confirmation of willingness to participate from the gatekeeper in Mumbai when you have it. This can be any written documentation eg an email. Please provide me with an electronic copy.

Comments made by the committee:



Sarah Riley, Chair, Psychology Department Ethics Committee

Date 11/11/14

Participant Information sheet

Project Title

How are urban Indians using social media in relation to new drinking cultures?

Invitation

You are kindly being invited to participate in a piece of research, which will form the thesis of a research masters (Mphil) project. The research aims to understand the relationship between social media use and drinking cultures. It will focus on you and your friendship group's involvement with social media and involve questions about drinking habits and nights out.

What will happen

If you agree to participate in this research, it will take place in three steps. The first, will involve you accepting the researcher as a Facebook friend, and grant permission to document aspects of your profile. Second, you will take part in an individual interview to talk about ways in which you engage with social media and the drinking culture you may be a part of. Third, to take part in a focus group discussion with others from your friend group where we can discuss the Facebook use and drinking culture together as a group.

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

All personal information relating to you (e.g., email address, mobile phone number) will be kept confidential and in a password protected file on my personal computer. The transcripts and Facebook content will be anonymised so that you cannot be identified in the research in any way. For example, if you say something that might give away your identity (e.g., where you live), then this information will also be removed.

The audio recording of the interview will be transferred to my personal computer immediately after the interview and then permanently deleted from the recording device. This audio file will be password protected so that no one else can access it. .

Time commitment

The Facebook related aspect of this project will happen before the interviews and will be done by the researcher. It will not take up any of your time.

The individual interviews will last anywhere between 45 – 60 minutes, The focus group interviews will be about 1 to 1.5 hours followed by a short debrief (about 15 minutes) and participants will be given the opportunity to ask questions at the beginning and the end of the debrief. The individual interviews and focus group interviews will not happen on the same day and times will be arranged based on your convenience.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are minimal risks associated with this study and it is hoped that you enjoy taking part. Sometimes talking about even everyday situations can bring up emotional memories. If this occurs for you, I will ask if you want to stop the interview. If in the course of participating in this interview you think that you would like some support then

in the first instance contact student support services add email contact here. In the unlikely event that you have cause for complaint, please contact the project supervisor who is overseeing this project, Dr Sarah Riley, scr2@aber.ac.uk.

What happens immediately after data collection?

You will have the opportunity to ask further questions regarding the study should you wish to do so.

Participants' rights

You can decide to leave the study at any point without providing an explanation. You can also choose to remove any aspects of your data (interviews or Facebook information) you have provided prior to the write up phase (1st April 2015) and accordingly your data will be deleted.

You have the right to ask questions about the procedures used in the research. If you have any questions after reading the information sheet you may ask the researcher at any point during the study.

All information provided will be stored safely on the researcher's computer, which no one will have access to whilst in India and it will be transferred onto Aberystwyth computers. All hard copies will be stored in the researcher private locker in India and in a secure filing cabinet at Aberystwyth University.

Thank you for considering taking part in my research, if you wish to take part, kindly read and sign the consent form provided.

Sagar Murdeshwar – Reseacher

E-mail – sam12@aber.ac.uk

Skype – [sagar.murdeshwar](https://www.skype.com/people/sagar.murdeshwar)

Consent form

Participant Consent Form	<i>Please initial</i>
1 The purpose and details of this study have been explained to me.	
2 I understand that all procedures have been approved by the Aberystwyth University's Department of Psychology Ethics Committee.	
3 I have read and understood the participant information form and this consent form.	
4 I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in the study.	
5 I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this study at any stage for any reason, and that I will not be required to explain my reasons for withdrawing.	
6 I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this study at any stage for any reason, until April 2015 and that I will not be required to explain my reasons for withdrawing.	
7 I understand that (with the exception of the above: point 6) all the information I provide will be treated in strict confidence and will be kept anonymous and confidential to the researchers unless it is judged that confidentiality will have to be breached for the safety of the participant or others.	
8 I understand that the focus group will be audio recorded.	
9 I agree to protect the anonymity of other participants and to keep the contents of our discussion private.	
10 I confirm that I am above 18 years of age, and in good mental, physical and psychological health to provide consent for my participation in this research.	
If you consent to your participation, please sign and complete the date below. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>Signed by participant:</div> <div>Dated:</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>Signed by researcher:</div> <div>Dated:</div> </div>	

If you have any questions feel free to contact the researcher. Alternatively, if you need to, you can also get in touch with the project supervisor

Sagar Murdeshwar – sam12@aber.ac.uk
(Researcher at Aberystwyth University)

Sarah Riley – scr2@aber.ac.uk
(Project supervisor)

Debrief sheet

Thank you for your participation in my research project. I genuinely appreciate your time and the information you have provided me. After the write up you are more than welcome to have a copy of the thesis and I am happy to discuss any aspects of the research.

If you would like the information you have provided to be removed this is possible before the start of the write up (1st April, 2014). Alternatively, if you have any issues I have included places you can find advice. Feel free to use the following websites.

1. www.talktofrank.com
2. www.crew2000.com
3. www.alcoholconcern.org.uk

Sagar Murdeshwar – sam12@aber.ac.uk

1. Would you be able to open your Facebook profile and talk me through it?
 - a) discuss various links and hyperlinks
 - b) how they found it and why they put it up?
2. What do you use Facebook for and how often do you use it?
3. How well can you relate to other people's content that appears on your Facebook wall?
4. What do you think your Facebook profile says about you? Do you think it describes you accurately?
5. What's your best/ worst experience on Facebook?
6. Do you use other social media platforms (e.g. Twitter) what role do these play in your nights out?
7. Do you feel like there are pictures or web pages (BuzzFeed etc) which at times accurately portray your night out with your friends? If so, what's it like to see your life reflected back at you?
8. Do you have any "going out" related posts/ photos?
9. Are all your friends a part of a similar drinking culture? If some of them are against it how do you manage your Facebook profile in relation to that?
10. Do you have any family on your Facebook profile? Does this change what you put on your profile?
11. Does your going out/ drinking ever conflict with your religious beliefs? If so how do you negotiate this?
12. Can you describe your best/ worst night out?
13. What are your views on the rise in new drinking establishments in Mumbai?
 - a. What does it feel like to be in those establishments
 - b. Are they convenient to get to? And how do you organize getting there?
14. Keeping with new drinking establishments and the changing landscape of Mumbai over the years do you consider yourself to be "new Indian"
 - a. What does it mean to be a young Indian at the present time?

15. How often do you go out drinking? And what kind of a drinker would you call yourself? E.g. social, binge?

Interview Questions – Focus group

Going out

1. What kind of social activities are you a part of?
2. Do you go to bars or clubs? Can you tell me why you might prefer one over the other?
3. How often do you go out? What factors help make up that decision? What role does social media play in the decision?
4. When you go out, do you usually all go out together as the same group of friends.. Do you go out with the same group of friends? Can you tell me about the friend circles you tend to go out with the most?
5. What's a good night out for you? What's the last good night you had?
6. What's been a bad night for you? Would you mind telling me about that?
7. What advice would you give someone who wants to go out drinking/ partying in Mumbai? Are there some things people need to consider? Can you tell me about them?
8. Would you say 'going out' is the same for both men and women or do gender differences exist?

Alcohol consumption

1. Can you talk me through your drinking on a good night out, what does the night start? Where do you typically go and what's it like?
2. What type of alcohol do you prefer? Is this choice consistent or does it change? In what situations does it change?
3. Does the atmosphere of the location affect your drink choice?
4. Do you use discounts and promotional offers? If so, where do you find out about these offers?

5. What do you tend to do when you're drinking together? Can you think of a typical example?
6. Why do you drink together?
7. What do you enjoy about drinking together? What don't you enjoy about it?
8. are there gender differences in the way men and women drink?

Social technologies and friendship

1. How do you keep in contact with your friends? Examples: face-to-face, phone, social networking sites?
2. How often do you go on Facebook?
3. How many friends do you have on Facebook ? Do u have many common friends?
4. Who do you interact with online? Are they any different from those you know offline?
5. What kind of privacy settings do you have in place? Are they different for different people? do you have to be careful about how you talk about nights out on FB
6. What kind of things do you tend to post on Facebook?
7. Do you take and post many photos on Facebook? How do you decide which photos to post on Facebook? how do you respond to ones you see, how often do you check, is facebook part of the night out
8. Do you think it's a good time to be young and living in Mumbai in the present day?
9. What are your views on the rise and effects of globalization?

Social media

My first participant who was also my gatekeeper was very excited at the prospect of being interviewed about the drinking culture she was a part of, moreover, she took it upon herself to show me how “awesome” the nightlife in Mumbai is. Our first meeting was along with four of her friends who were not so sure about taking part in the research as they felt it might require them to address certain problematic drinking behaviors. Upon explaining the project to them they were very keen and shared the same enthusiasm as my first participant.

The rest of the meeting was spent talking about all the drinking establishments I had to visit during my trip. It was a long list of names and the girls spoke about them with excitement. I asked why I should choose one place over another and if they are regulars at any of these places. One of the girls replied, “new places open every week, you don’t really have time to become a regular”. And to the first question of why one place over another a girl exclaimed, “they have really nice glasses, I got my long island served in a little bathtub”. We had a little laugh but what I didn’t realize at the time was even though the girls were not completely serious about the above responses there was something really important in those statements. Through my interviews with the group and also interviews from several other informants I got my first taste of the what it’s like to be young person drinking in Mumbai. I experienced first hand this need to been seen or in their words ‘experience’ the new establishments when I got a call from my gatekeeper saying, ‘there’s this new place, the Bar Stock Exchange, WE HAVE TO GO THERE!!!’ (I’ll get to Bar Stock Exchange later)

I wondered if this trend of checking out the new places was really as prominent as I initially thought and why was it so important. It was at this point I started to understand the complex role that social media plays. Having added all my participants on Facebook, I noticed that their profiles did not have much content about their nights out, apart from the occasion picture of a drink (in the pretty glass) and a few group photos without any alcohol. It was during this familiarization phase of their profiles that I stumbled across the events and places section of the profiles, which for many of my participants (those very active on social media) had a long list of places they had tagged, some of which they

mentioned to me on the first night. This section also had “likes” and comments, which highlighted to me the excitement surrounding these places and a possible reason why my participants were going to all the new places. Facebook was not only a type of search engine of events, but because of the way Facebook works, tagging, liking and commenting on the establishments places gave you an “exclusive” insight not only to offers and events but putting it up on Facebook meant you were there first.

Although “why” is a question that pops into mind, at this juncture I was more interested in the “how”. How did this trend/ habit of posting specifically the location of these places begin? This was my first understanding of the ways in which social media is promoted in an offline space, thus opening up the conversation/ engagement in an online space. Below I talk about three different ways in which the establishment urge their customers to ‘stay in touch’ with them through social media. After my first interview, my participant invited me for a drink with a friend at the British Brewing Company (BBC). It’s a restaurant with the décor of a traditional British pub. Although that’s what they are going for its contrasted with modern and sophisticated service and although it feels like being in a pub, a pub-goer might be confused at first. You wait outside till they get you a table and on arriving at your table a waiter comes up with an Ipad, which he leaves on the table. All orders are to be made from this tablet. As I was placing my order and getting to grips with this Ipad in a “British pub” a photographer came up and asked if we’d like to get a picture together. My participant and I got our picture taken and then the photographer said, I could look it up on their Facebook page. After placing my order a message popped up on the Ipad asking me if I’d like to “Share” on Facebook. I found this a bit strange, however, as I looked around me everyone was taking pictures of their food and drink.

This photo and share things on Facebook was standard practice but it was done creatively and differently depending on the establishment. Thus, a consumer is constantly engaging with social media, having fun with it and it socially serves two purposes. The first, is of telling people you were at the establishment the second, becoming a part of an exclusive group who ‘found out’ about the place before it became mundane and not ‘like-worthy’. Apart from the obvious reasons of seeming ‘cool’ and gaining social and digital

capital I was intrigued as to what other incentives are provided for posting these things online.

Now to Bar Stock Exchange, the new place everyone was “talking about” while I was in Mumbai. When I say talking about I mean both in offline and online spaces. Bar Stock Exchange takes the “share” aspect of BBC and other places and makes it a fun game. The idea is simple, and it has been done in the UK, except in Mumbai, the social media component really merges great advertising with using technology to create a certain drinking experience. Drink prices change, as commodity prices on the stock market. In the UK, once the prices of a drink drops there is a mad rush to get to the bar, this partially emulates the frantic atmosphere of the stock exchange. I was amazed to find people sitting at their seats when prices dropped and this was because they had an app which not only had the “rates” but they could also place their order with it. I now saw what the fuss was all about, my participants had seen their friends with these apps on their phones, this app goes live when the bar is open and so even if you’re not there, you know how cheap certain drinks can be.

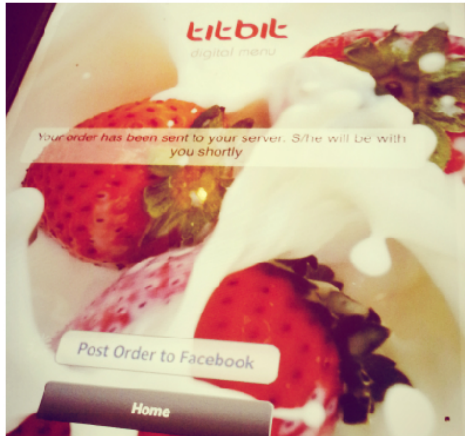
It was all a bit to modern for me at first and I was confused as, this social media engagement was unlike anything I had read about or experienced in comparison to their Western youth counterparts. In that sense the social media use was not very Western, it was more modern and commercial. Apart from the apps and quirky ways in interacting with establishments within the online sphere, I was also interested in cultural artifacts created/ or distributed within an online space, specifically in terms of drinking.

I met with a writer/ blogger who has written BuzzFeedisque articles and he was more than happy to talk about his job and his writing. The conversation lasted about 2 hours and was fascinating for me as a researcher and as a digital native. Many of his articles made Western “pop” references and I wanted to know what he thought about his role as a writer to a young demographic. The cultural artifacts I had seen he informed me are called “listicles” as they are lists which his company sends him out to write based on their corporate partners needs. What I consider cultural artifacts play a very important role, in that, because they are based on creating a “cool” vibe for a certain place with references to Western pop images. This makes the shared experience of being in these places more relatable to an Indian demographic but it also draws on Western media

which is familiar to people in terms of drinking or a pub scene. His role is to bring to a audience a world they all know and have seen on television and tie that into where they could have a similar experience in nearby drinking establishments.

Now I realized the power and importance of engaging with these establishments on a social media platform. From the costumers point of view it's a win-win. Not only does it increase your social capital and allow you to be a part of an exclusive club it also gives you rewards. The use of social media is important for most organizations and consumers alike, however, I was interested with how these Facebook profiles are managed given the stigma behind drinking, or the perceived stigma behind drinking and I will address this issue elsewhere. At this point I was interested in how people manage not only their real or offline lives but also their online presence given the covert nature of these drinking behaviors.

Like I mentioned earlier, during my familiarization phase I noticed that despite not having many pictures of nights out, there was a lot of activity on the events and locations pages. The concept of using social media for such purposes remain the same as their Western counterparts, however, they need to be a bit more subtle given the presence of family on their friends list. My understanding of this through talking to people is that the locations and the events pages are not very obvious to a non-digital native (i.e. parents) and as long as there are no explicit pictures of people being intoxicated its acceptable. However, overall, I felt that drinking, as long as it is in a particular contexts is widely accepted in Mumbai. I think social media initiatives made by the drinking establishments and advertisers like my informant help create a modern feel and their social media presence also allows them to “create fun banter” within an online space. Through Western references and familiar Indian traits, the social media aspect of drinking in Mumbai in a sense resemble drinking practices of young adults in the West. I found that more “drinking talk” on social media comes from drinking establishments and is then taken up by the customers.



The establishments

This section describes my experiences visiting and engaging with people in the drinking establishments in Mumbai. During my time in Mumbai I wanted to explore a variety of drinking establishments with clients from varying socio-economic backgrounds. The reason behind this being that the Indian middle class is actually divided into lower-middle, middle-middle and upper-middle and most of my participants were from middle-middle to upper-middle. The differences between the people consider themselves middle-middle and upper-middle is not as noticeable in comparison to the lower-middle. This stands true even with the drinking establishments. While describing the drinking establishments I would urge the reader to keep in mind the young and modern women, a subset of whom are my participants' and where they might fit into this range of drinking establishments.

Before I started my interviews, I went out one night to a local pub in a suburban area of Mumbai; it was 11 pm at night. We were waiting on a few friends and one of who was a woman. I am not one to point out such a detail. However, I was asked by the manager at the establishment if any women are joining us, later I was informed that women aren't allowed after 11 pm. Having spent time researching drinking in India through my online ethnography this came as a shock to me as the impression I got online was of a very open and neutral drinking scene. The manager explained to me in a very matter a fact way that men in the pub tend to get aggressive after they are intoxicated and we do not allow women for their own safety. This was only one isolated incident and the majority of drinking establishments did not have such a rule, however, the place described above comes closest of a standard British pub where people are just unwinding and having a pint.

One observation of mine which I didn't think much of to begin with but later become an important aspect of these drinking establishments the service of food and drink. I understand that there are certain pub classics however; this was a whole new thing. It was a very important factor behind choosing a particular establishment. Indians love their food, and international cuisine is expanding in cities. The drinking

establishments used creative and innovative menus to make the customer “stay on” for the drinks menu. From the food menus of all the places I went to what struck me most was the near perfect balance between Western “you –must –try this” style of food blended with familiar Indian influences. This does not directly promote drinking, however, the creative ways of incorporating alcohol and food in quite a literal sense was an ingenious way of weaning new customers to try a drink. Two places I visited did this particularly well. The first had things like vodka penne while the other took classic Indian street food and spiked it with alcohol to create a more familiar food. The idea of blending new goods and services with those of familiar to the costumer is not a new one and I will elaborate on this juxtaposition between Western and Indian later.

My main aim in this section is to paint a picture of what options you have as a young university student in terms of places you can go to and describe these places through my experience of spending time there. By my first pub visit where women aren’t allowed after 11pm it became clear that women cant just turn up to any pub and just pop in for a drink, a certain amount of planning is required. I mentioned this to one of my informants and she took me to many other places where she would feel comfortable going any time and even with a small group. Mumbai is a very safe place, however, these are places where the crowd is of a higher socio-economic background. I was very impressed by these establishments as they seemed like entered a different world. Depending on the kind of atmosphere they were trying to create, at times I felt I wasn’t in Mumbai. All the places had one thing in common, a bouncer standing outside alongside a waiter asking if we’d reserved a table, after all these places were technically “restaurants”. My informant told me that they always go in the afternoon, as they don’t need to book a table and its happy hour. After visiting a few more establishments with varying prices I noticed that all of these places very upmarket and wondered how university students could afford going to these places regularly.

There are three aspects of the earlier paragraph, which I started to pick up on and kept in mind during my other visits to the drinking establishments.

- 1) Security
- 2) Happy Hour
- 3) Regularity

The bouncer at the door with a closed door behind him, not only allowed these places to create an air of exclusivity but also served two other purposes, it made it safer as no one of the street could walk in without the bouncers approval and it also allowed the establishment to create a unique ambiance inside which was detached from the busy and noisy world outside of that door. All the places I visited with my participants had this kind of an arrangement, it wasn't directly related with them feeling safe, but all the places that they were inclined to go were set up like that.

All the places frequented by my participants and a majority of the urban youth were upmarket establishments and not the kind of places their British university counterparts would visit or afford. A lot has been written about offers and cheap drinks in the UK pubs to attract a university/ young demographic. On the surface, it did not seem like it was a factor in young peoples drinking in Mumbai. It was often masked by the fact that these places were so vastly different in terms of their atmosphere and appeal, saving money seemed like a real “buzz kill” when contrasted with the “have –an- experience”, “try-something-new –tonight” rhetoric of these establishments. However, the place was full of university students during happy hour, which was normally from 3 pm to about 7/8 pm. My participants took me to several places during happy hour and instantly I could see the appeal. It wasn't a standard happy hour; again it was done very creatively. Incorporating quirky games, social media promotions and other such fun ways of gaining discounts. One of the places I went to had this dice game, you could guess even or odd numbers on the roll of a dice and if you were correct it was 50 % off on the bill. If you were slightly more adventurous and if you guess the exact number that would come up when two dice were rolled all drinks were on the house. Some places gave you discounts for “hashtagging” certain phrases and other social media engagement. Happy hour in these establishments did indeed create a very ‘happy’ atmosphere but it also reinforced the earlier aspect of safety. Happy hour was mainly during times when university students could go there, it created a sort of “student union” vibe as the crowd normally comprised of students from near by colleges.

The happy hour schemes meant cheap drinks till 8 pm, however, where do the “nights out” come in? When asked about this my participants informed me that it was during these happy hours that they first started drinking alcohol during their early college

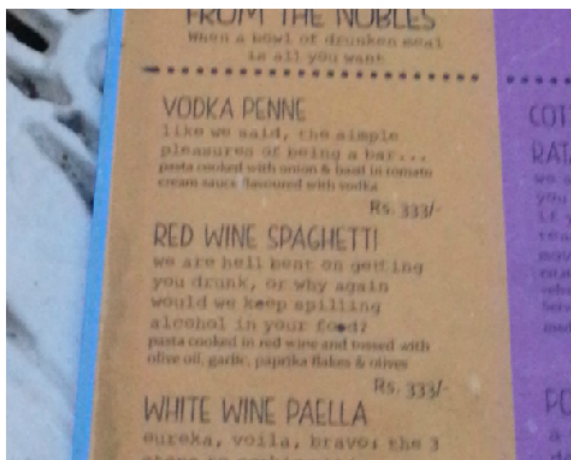
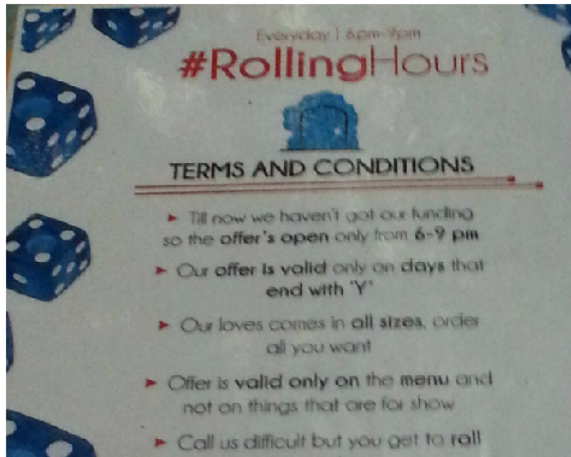
days. The happy hours served two other purposes for young people in Mumbai. Irrespective if you are a drinker or not, these places were popular hangout zones for university students and when most of my participants had their first ever drink. It acted as a non-stressful atmosphere in which to try your first drink as oppose to committing to going to a “pub”, after all there was so much more to do if you chose not to drink. The other aspect some of my participants found useful was that it meant they could still be home before their curfew as some of their parents were unaware that they drank. In terms of the nights out, there were a few places, which had cheap drinks on certain days of the week till closing time, while some places were specifically targeting a young college demographic.

This is the third aspect of regular drinking places comes in. The happy hour allowed my participants to visit the newer more expensive places, however, these other places allowed for a cheap night on a more regular bases. My participants felt they had out grown these places and took me there to show me why they felt that way. I went to two of these places before I realized I myself couldn’t handle anymore. If I had to describe them, I think what they were going for atmosphere-wise was a “playground with booze”. Very loud music, bright colours seemed to be the norm. As they blasted the pop charts mixed with a few songs, which were very popular 90’s tracks, young costumers sang along. I have mentioned use of social media before, but almost everyone had their phones out and were recording and taking pictures. They even had a “selfie booth” where you technically did not take a “selfie” as a cameraman took pictures of you wearing fun costumes all of which were provided by the establishment. One of my participants, cringing, said, “I cant believe we used to be like that”. When you walked in you were presented with a shots menu first, and waiter with a badge which said “here to get you smashed”. I guess when my gatekeeper said, we can’t really be regulars at places, because new places are opening up every week, she did not mention these places, however, for a younger demographic (between 18-21) these could be considered the regular places.

In terms of my participants who had to balance and negotiate between safety, money and fun they preferred to visit slightly upmarket places with a mature demographic of young working professionals. They often went their around 5 pm as they

would make the most of happy hour and that's when most of the "kids" had to go home as college finished at that time and young professionals start to come in.

It took my a while to understand how my participants and other young adults who are still technically university students but consider themselves older and more mature than their 18 year old first year counterparts logistically planned their drinking. Another aspect, which is important to all this is that of having a curfew, when they were between 18-21, they had curfews and had to be home right after college, however, as my participants were between 22-24 they could stay out longer, if not most said they were staying at a friends place for the night.



Perception of alcohol and those who consume it

In this section I will expand my demographic to include not only young urban Indians but also people from other socio-economic backgrounds. During my time in Mumbai, I tired

to converse with a whole range of people about not just drinking *per se* but what they think about the current state of Mumbai and India. This allowed me to better contextualize the modern and globalized drinking cultures the young people were participating in. One line of inquiry I was curious about was people's opinions of people who drink alcohol and had these really changed in the last 5 years in which these new establishments had sprung up. Growing up in India myself, as a child, me and those around me were constantly told horror stories about what goes on in pubs and it was almost implied that drinking alcohol means you're an alcoholic. My point being that drinking alcohol has traditionally had negative connotations. After a few conversations with people from the lower-middle/ working class (i.e. Rickshaw drivers, street stall owners etc.) it soon became clear to me that in their circles opinions haven't changed. They shared some of their experiences about drinking, and it had a very different narrative to that of young peoples drinking. I got to hear first hand the things I was warned about as a child. I appreciated their honesty and was intrigued as to why even in the same urban Mumbai; there was such different accounts.

After all, these people were living in "developing" and "aspiring" India. However, these discourses, according to them are taken up by the middle class to improve their position in society. Conversations with the lower-middle class painted a very different picture and moving focus back to young urban middle class, I wanted to know how these two worlds are constructed so differently. I had read a lot about the new, hungry, aspirational, globally recognized India, I wanted to see manifestations of these symbols which might lead me to understanding the glamorous portrayal of drinking. Given the marketing and corporate interest I was starting to pick up on the various public relations maneuvers, which put into perspective the section on drinking establishments.

After many more conversations with people outside my young middle class background, it felt as if they lived in a different world and luckily for me, my participants, and others informants were keen to show me their world. However, it's difficult to step outside of the reality you live in. While I was off making notes, and taking pictures of, in my participants eyes the most mundane things, I was starting to understand the complex ways in which the new drinking culture is so much more than simply "having a drink".

Lets start with shopping malls, these were the first signs of globalization, however, in 2015, they have now become the usual attraction, but at attraction nonetheless. When I found myself having a drink at a mall, not only did I find it strange but also in a sense it's the best way to make drinking acceptable. Alongside the "bar & restaurant" concept, malls are places which are surrounded by Western brands and having a pub in a mall makes it just another Western brand people are aspiring to purchase. During the fieldwork, I went to three different pubs in malls, my participants did mention that its not their usual place, but it's nice to grab a drink after shopping. They do not get drunk there though as I imagine walking out in a crowed small full of families might not be ideal.

Apart from malls, advertising and Western media have also made drinking more acceptable. My younger informants feel that all this talk about globalization and being a country with Western influences symbolizes development and Western countries drink and they celebrate and drinking in a sense becomes a rite of passage. Not only did many of my participants talk about American TV shows like friends, and other New York based shows, but social media allows them to engage with Western media content to a whole different level. The establishments themselves further reinforce these Western traditions as their own.

- 1) Shots on arrival or right before paying
- 2) Beer at the end of a long week.
- 3) Drinking competitions

Pubs in malls and pubs merged with restaurants are two important ways in which drinking becomes not only as acceptable part of society but given the discourses the middle class subscribe to they enable them to live their global, Westernized practices within a familiar Indian context. It is difficult to pin point how these practices began but through one of my informants in the marketing field, I learnt that international "gigs" and concerts played an important part. My informant a very knowledgeable man from an advertising background mentioned how Mumbai is now one of the most popular destinations for famous artists. During my trip, Ed Sheeran and Jerry Sienfield who was performing his first gig in that part of the world were due to perform in Mumbai. These

are not the first big names to perform in Mumbai and most of these events are sponsored by alcohol companies. Every establishment I went to during this period had adverts of the gigs and some more famous ones were giving out free tickets through innovative contests.

The perception of alcohol or rather the people who drink alcohol is heavily dependent on the context. Above I have outlined several different contexts in which modern globalized drinking takes place. Within these contexts drinking is an international brand as with pubs in shopping malls, it's an accompaniment to a Western meal in restaurant/ pubs and finally, it's a part of a party, a concert where people experience international artists first hand. I find the last one is of particular importance. The young generation today has grown up watching American television, as satellite televisions were launched in India in the early 90's and being able to experience a live performance from artists of such international stature signifies for many young people, India being on par with the Western world.



